

M E M O I R S
OF
GEORGE ANNE BELLAMY,

INCLUDING ALL HER

I N T R I G U E S ;

WITH

G E N U I N E A N E C D O T E S

OF ALL HER

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE CONNECTIONS.

By a GENTLEMAN of Covent-Garden Theatre.

L O N D O N :

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THE HISTORY OF

THE CITY OF LONDON

FROM THE FIRST

SETTLING OF THE

IN THE YEAR 1666

TO THE PRESENT

BY JOHN STOW

AND JOHN WARD

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MEMOIRS

OF

GEORGE ANNE BELLAMY.

CHAP. I.

HER BIRTH AND EDUCATION.

MISS George Anne Bellamy, whose chequered life it is the business of this volume to exhibit, may be called the child of hereditary misfortune.

Her mother, who seems to have been as beautiful as she was imprudent, made an early sacrifice of her honour at the shrine of vanity. This is the foible of the sex, and it ruins by thousands.

While yet a girl in her teens, she suffered herself to be seduced by one of those fashionable ruffians, who in the shape of young noblemen of honour, spend the prime of life in committing depredations on the innocent.

This illustrious hero was no other than Lord Tyrawley, and the deed will transmit his name to posterity with distinction.

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MEMOIRS OF

In an evil hour she yielded to his unhal-
lowed wishes, and placed in his hollow
protestations unbounded confidence.

Why are not young women apprized, or
why will they not believe, that almost all
men, under the impulse of certain appetites
or propensities, will say what they do not
mean, and promise without any intention to
perform.

Miss Seale, for that was the name of Miss
Bellamy's mother, was torn from the board-
ing-school, and placed in elegant apartments
in Somerset-house. Her lover was all at-
tention. She rioted in the bosom of luxury,
assumed his name, received the caresses of
his young companions; and in this elysium of
love and sensuality, forgot, for awhile, her
friends, her virtue, and the perils of her
situation.

The state of her seducer's affairs, which
harrassed his mind, and drew him to an ex-
pedient inimical to her views, soon roused
her from the soft delirium. He wanted
money, and could have it only by marriage.
His elevated rank in society, not to mention
his personal accomplishments, were calcu-
lated to bring a good price in the female
market. To this, therefore, his circum-
stances now impelled him to have recourse.

His mistress, who had taken his name, on
hearing what was going forward, left So-
merfet-house in a rage, and exposed the
situation

situation of his heart and fortune to the family with whom, by this time, he was clandestinely allied. And by this frantic ebullition of passion, she at once gratified her own revenge, and disappointed all his pecuniary expectations. For Lady Mary Stewart, daughter of the Earl of Blessington, whom he married, was not only ordinary in her person, but deprived by such an unprecedented step, of the fortune she must otherwise have received from her father.

In this chagrin, his Lordship went to Portugal; and she who had lately been Lady Tyrawley, and acted the first part in Somerset-house, was now reduced to the necessity of sustaining the lowest character on a public theatre.

His attachment to the woman whom he had thus injured, awakened all his sensibility for her now, that she was no longer in his power. He wrote to her in all the language which the tenderest passions could inspire. But she never would listen to his importunity, till impelled by a series of misfortunes which attended an abortive pursuit of her profession in Ireland.

His Lordship was now separated from his Lady, and lived at Lisbon in great splendour: but unknown to our fair adventurer, who was now anxious to throw herself once more in his arms, he had just took a Portuguese beauty into keeping. She had been

some weeks in Portugal before the discovery of this circumstance. And she owed it to the communications of Captain Bellamy, who commenced an acquaintance with her in this country; and who, entertaining a strong passion for her, grew jealous of Lord Tyrawley's visits. This instigated him to make all the enquires he could concerning his Lordship; and the situation in which he found that Nobleman, urged with all the temporary enthusiasm which suspicion could suggest, aided by the disappointment which his Lordship's perfidy naturally produced, to a woman whom his intrigues had so cruelly undone, procured the Captain's addresses a success, which they could not otherwise have obtained. Marriage was the immediate consequence. And the moment the ceremony was performed, the Captain sailed with his wife for Ireland, whither he was bound.

This match had been made and solemnized with so much caution and address, that his Lordship knew nothing of the matter till the party were gone. And it was an event which could do no great violence to such feelings, as had hitherto marked his Lordship's commerce with the sex. He got rid, at least, of one of two jealous women by whom he had been placed in a most unpleasant situation.

Captain

Captain Bellamy and his Lady had been arrived in Ireland only a few months, when the unfortunate person who is the subject of these Memoirs made her appearance. This happened on St. George's Day, 1733, some months too soon for the husband to claim any honour or interest in the matter. Mrs. Bellamy had so carefully concealed her pregnancy and connection with Lord Tyrawley, that the Captain entertained not the least suspicion of her incontinence. But this inauspicious event discovered the whole, and so exasperated was the Captain with this proof of her duplicity and guilt, that he immediately left the kingdom, and never after saw or corresponded with her.

The moment his Lordship knew of their departure from Lisbon, and whither they were destined, he wrote to a Captain Pye, who resided near Fingal, the town where she had settled, to request, that if she should prove pregnant by such a time as he specified, his Lady would take the infant under her care as soon as it was born, without suffering the mother, if possible, to see it. He imagined Mrs. Bellamy had made this elopement from the depravity of her passions, and that no marriage had taken place; and it was from such a sentiment he had given these injunctions. They were, however, pretty liberally obeyed. The child was taken from its mother soon after birth and put to a

nurse, with whom she continued two years. Captain Pye then took her home to his own house, where she remained about other two, when he was requested to send her to France for education. A daughter of the unfortunate Colonel Frazer was selected for her companion. They took London in their way to France. And here Miss Bellamy was introduced to her mother, and strongly disgusted with her reception.

On their arrival at Boulogne, they were placed in the convent of the *Nunciates*. But the discipline which prevailed here, affected Miss Frazer so much, and the filthiness of the convent became so perfectly insupportable to Miss Bellamy, even young as she was, that they determined to leave it. For this purpose they applied to Mr. Smith, a trader in this place, who, by Lord Tyrawley's order, supplied them with whatever they wanted, and whose wife readily conducted them to the convent of the *Ursulines*.

In this pacific mansion they continued till Miss Bellamy was eleven years of age, when their return to England was ordered. It was with infinite regret they left a situation in which they had enjoyed so much innocence, happiness, and satisfaction. And often has Miss Bellamy since had occasion to exclaim,
“ Dear, happy, much regretted mansion!
“ Thou sweet abode of tranquillity and de-
“ light! How supremely blessed should I have
“ been,

“ been, had I remained till this hour within
“ they sacred walls !”

C H A P. II.

MISS BELLAMY COMMENCES AN ACTRESS.

ON their arrival in England, they were lodged with an old servant of Lord Tyrawley, where they were to continue till his Lordship's return from Portugal. This event soon took place, and they were received by his Lordship with great kindness. His Portuguese family attended him to England, where his Lordship's house had much more the appearance of a Turkish seraglio, than the palace of a British nobleman. But Miss Bellamy, in whom her father took great delight, not pleased with her *Tawny* associates, had influence enough to effect a removal. Miss Frazer and she were therefore placed at Mrs. Jones's, in St. James-street, who kept in that gay situation, a china and bijou shop ; which, from the sprightliness of Mrs. Jones, and other circumstances, was the common resort for genteel company. Here his Lordship, with others, was in the habit of daily lounging for an hour or two ; here Miss Bellamy founded an intimacy with the honourable Miss Conway, and Miss St. Leger, who honoured her with their friendship to

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the latest period of their lives; and here, on the whole, they found themselves very comfortably accommodated; but that satisfaction was soon at an end. They had resided but a short while in their new abode, when poor Miss Frazer was seized with the measles, and notwithstanding every care, fell a victim to that disorder. Miss Bellamy was so much affected by this accident, that her health was thought in danger. On this account her noble father hired a small box in Bushy-Park, where he repaired with his family, which consisted of his Lordship, Donna Anna, his Portuguese mistress, and four young girls, whom his Lordship had all by different mothers. In this retirement, Miss Bellamy, like most other young girls in similar situations, seems to have been completely spoiled by paternal fondness and accidental flattery. And who knows not how many of the most virtuous and susceptible minds have been thus undone by solitude, novels, and the affected idolatry of coxcombs. Adulation is a poison which all are but too apt to swallow, but never operates with so much malignity, as when administered in the beginning of life.

The only romance, however, within Miss Bellamy's reach, was Cassandra, and this she was wisely forbid to read. She, therefore, endeavoured to learn Pope's Homer by rote; and in this made such proficiency, that in a short

short time she could repeat the three first books. The moment she had accomplished this task, she longed to be introduced to the poet, and pleased herself with the applause she should receive, on reciting the verses before him. Her father, who could refuse to her nothing on which she placed a preference, soon carried her with him to Twickenham; but immediately on her entrance, Mr. Pope delivered her over to the care of his house-keeper. She felt the mortifying disappointment severely, and determined in revenge, never to read another word of the work, but to attach herself to Mr. Dryden's Virgil in its stead. On her return from Twickenham, she got first acquainted with Chesterfield, who had also been on a visit to Pope, and who, by his politeness, made ample amends for the contempt she had just received.

When Lord Tyrawley was nominated Ambassador to the Court of Russia, Miss Bellamy was left to the care of a Lady of quality, who desired it of his Lordship. She was at the same time very peremptorily prohibited from ever seeing her mother, who, poor unhappy woman, at this time had been plunged into fresh calamity. A son of Sir George Walter, who might have been her child, had married her in a paroxysm of love; but a union dictated only by passion, was not likely to last. He therefore took an opportunity one morning, while she was at a rehearsal, of stripping her

of all the most valuable things she possessed, and left her to join his regiment at Gibraltar. He even decorated with her clothes, the wretched woman whom he had seduced to accompany him abroad.

It was surely but natural for her in such a crisis, to wish to see her daughter; who much to her honour, in spite of all her father's injunctions, immediately obeyed the calls of a parent in distress.

On the commencement of this very natural connexion, Miss Bellamy had much satisfaction in the fondness of a parent, whom till now she had hardly known. The splendour and elegance she had left, was amply repaid by the tenderness and indulgence she now experienced from her mother.

The little money she brought with her was soon expended; but her watch and other trinkets brought such a relief from the pawnbrokers, as supplied their necessities till quarter day; when one quarter of her yearly salary of an hundred pounds, settled on her by her father, was due.

This, however, had only been allowed, on the conditions that she was not to move from the situation in which he had placed her, and particularly that she should not see her mother. On her application for it now, she, therefore, found it stopt; and her mother experienced, when it was too late, that, by this

this manœuvre, she had three instead of one to provide for.

Mrs. Jackson, who had lately arrived from the East-Indies for the education of her daughters, resided at Montpelier-row, Twickenham. This Lady was uncommonly generous; and the liberal remittances which she obtained from her husband, enabled her to indulge her feelings as she pleased. Miss Bellamy now went with her mother on a visit to Mrs. Jackson, as the two latter had contracted an intimate acquaintance.

It was here Miss Bellamy was introduced to Mrs. Woffington, and by her to Garrick and Sheridan. A sister of this celebrated actress being a candidate for the stage, the Distressed Mother was acted in a barn. Miss Bellamy played Andromache; and Garrick observed, that she appeared much more in earnest than the young Lady who had been accustomed to theatrical amusements. Among the people of fashion who attended this curious exhibition, the late Sir William Yonge was one; and gave it as his opinion, that Miss Bellamy would make a figure in a capital line.

On Mrs. Jackson being taken so ill, that she was obliged to return to Twickenham, she took a house in Henrietta-street. Lady Walter, the name of Bellamy's mother, was easily prevailed upon to become her guest. Lady Walter being intimate with Mr. Rich,

then Manager of Covent-Garden, she often carried her daughter there. A very close friendship immediately commenced between Miss Bellamy and the Manager's daughters, who agreeing one evening to act Othello, Miss Bellamy chose for her part that of the Moor; and being altogether by themselves, they gave full scope to their feelings. It was in bellowing the *extravaganza* of this romantic character, that she was overheard by Rich, who urged and excited her from that moment, to adopt the profession. Lady Walter dreaded the misfortunes she had herself experienced, but consented with some reluctance; and Rich promised to support her in a capital line. He entered the more readily into this engagement, that he had not another Lady at that time suited either for the character of young heroines in Tragedy, or sprightly girls in genteel Comedy.

Miss Bellamy was then only in her fourteenth year. Her figure was elegant, her voice powerful and melodious, and she discovered great spirits, and not a little humour. She had perfected herself in the two characters of Monimia and Athenas. The former was fixed on for her first appearance.

Mr. Quin was at this time the acting Manager at Covent-garden, and governed the Theatre, as Miss Bellamy says, with a rod of iron. Rich was too indolent to interfere; though

though when he did, he was not to be contradicted. He was now to introduce the new actress to Quin, who had a dressing-room for himself, as he seldom mixed with any of the profession; and even did not know any of them except Ryan, for whom he had a sincere friendship. This room the wags had styled the Lion's-Den, to which Mr. Rich repaired, but where he was obliged to wait Quin's leisure.

Quin had no sooner heard Rich propose Miss Bellamy in the character of Monimia, than he declared, "It will not do, Sir!" The manager equally laconic and positive, retorted, "It shall do, Sir!" Quin turning round to Miss Bellamy, who, during this disagreeable scene was almost petrified with fear, said, with his characteristic furliness, "Play Serina child, before you think of "Monimia." Piqued by what she deemed a sarcasm, she answered with a readiness which made the old man's eyes glisten: "If "I did Sir, I should never live to play the "Orphan!"

The altercation continued, and both were equally obstinate; and Rich before he went away, ordered a rehearsal of the Orphan next morning. But in deference to Quin, the most respectable performers were all absent. Rich did all he could to keep up the spirits of the young Orphan, by consulting her

her humour minutely, in the dress most proper at once for the character, and her first appearance.

At length, the long wished for evening approached, when this momentous experiment was to be made. The audience was splendid, but humane, as they always are to a new performer. Rich and Quin were both impatient to see the event. Miss Bellamy, from a thousand circumstances, felt her situation in all its embarrassment. And in proportion as she failed in attention or spirit, Quin triumphed, and Rich expostulated, which only increased her difficulty. In the fourth act, however, she had the good fortune to catch the true theatrical inspiration. And Quin, with a generosity that does him infinite honour, forgetting all his aversion the moment she had finished, clasped her in his arms, and exclaimed aloud, "Thou art a divine creature, and the true spirit is in thee." And the success of a new pantomime could not have given Rich much more satisfaction than her success.

This effected a very universal revolution in her favour among the players, who respected her now as much as they had formerly despised her. Quin, henceforth treated her with tenderness and esteem, and invited her to all his *petits soupers*, where Mrs. Jackson often attended her; where she one evening met

met with a relation she had not seen for years, the celebrated Thomson, author of the Seasons. For these suppers were meetings devoted to classical entertainments, to which the greatest masters in literature and art were generally invited, and where the merit of new publications was liberally canvassed.

Quin, however, thinking himself not too old to be censured, was extremely cautious of the manner in which he received Miss Bellamy's visits. He had told her, that for this reason, she should never call on him alone. This made her apprehensive, that she might have offended a man, whom she venerated as a father. Notwithstanding this extreme delicacy, after a rehearsal of the Maid's Tragedy, in which she was to act Aspasia, he one day desired to speak with her in his dressing-room, where he addressed her nearly in these words. "You are become an object of much attention with the public. The temptations this will expose you to, are innumerable. Be not intoxicated with the love of finery. If this prove your foible, it will be easy to ruin you. Most men are rascals. Your youth and beauty ought to make you doubly cautious. But whenever you want any thing in my power, which money can purchase, come to me and say, James

"Quin,

“Quin, I want such a thing. My purse
“shall always be at your service.”

C H A P. III.

A VISIT, A CAPTURE, AND A RESCUE.

MISS Bellamy's theatrical celebrity was so much increased in consequence of her acting Eudossia, in the Siege of Damascus, at a night's notice, that she immediately acquired the approbation and patronage of two Ladies of the first distinction, the late Duchefs of Montague, then Lady Cardigan, and her Grace of Queensberry. The latter of these Ladies, had not before attended any theatrical exhibition since the death of her favourite Gay.

The receipts of the Theatre at that time did not afford her a salary adequate to the parts she played, but the Manager gave her a benefit on one of his own nights, free of all expences.

A little before this, she received a verbal message to be at Queensberry-house next day, by twelve o'clock. She therefore dressed as elegantly as she could, and went on her visit in a chair. In her way, she waited on the Countess of Cardigan, and had every
reason

reason to be pleased with the reception her Ladyship gave her.

When she went to Queensbury-House and sent in her name, the only answer returned was, that her Grace knew no such person. She was therefore obliged to return home. The moment she told what reception she had found, a female relation of her mother's, from Ireland, who was as deformed in body as in mind, endeavoured to persuade Lady Walter, that the invitation had been only Miss Bellamy's chimera.

Prince Lobkowitz, who was then here in a public capacity, accosted her the moment she entered the green-room, requesting a box at her benefit for the *corps diplomatique*. But she was instantly given to understand by the housekeeper, that all the boxes were engaged: every one, except those of the Countess of Cardigan, the Duchess Dowager of Leeds, and Lady Shaftesbury, being hired by her Grace of Queensberry.

The Prince, however, was satisfied with a balcony for himself and friends; and on her return home from the Theatre, she found a note from the Duchess of Queensberry, desiring to see her next morning.

Miss Bellamy set out for Queensberry-House on foot, and was admitted immediately to her Grace, who chid her for coming the day before in a chair, and dressed in
silk.

filk, and complimented her on the plain linen gown in which she now appeared.

Her Grace all this time was cleaning pictures, which Miss Bellamy offered to do for her; but was repulsed by the Duchess, who told her she had people enough to do it, but she chose to do it herself. Miss Bellamy, as an apology, alledged, she had learned to clean pictures when she lived with Mrs. Jones. What, said her Grace, are you the girl of whom Chesterfield was wont to speak. Miss Bellamy owned she had the honour of being known to that Nobleman.

She then presented the young actress with two hundred and fifty guineas, and twenty for the tickets which the Duke and she had ordered. She also gave her a bill for Tyrawley's sake, and then ordered the coach to drive her home, that no accident might happen to her while she had so much property about her.

Her chief admirers in the male line were Lord Byron, a Nobleman who had little to boast of but a title and a face, and Mr. Montgomery, since Sir George Metham. She would listen to no proposals but marriage and a coach, and Montgomery soon and frankly confessed that neither was in his power. Byron's vanity was hurt by her indifference, and he resolved on revenge; and having formed his diabolical design, he committed the execution of it to an Earl, whose
flagitious

flagitious conduct rendered him the opprobrium of the order.

This noble rake was in pursuit of a young Lady with whom Miss Bellamy had contracted an intimacy. Her mother did not like this intimacy, on account of some disrespectful connexions which it involved, and had forbid the continuance of it. Lady Walter had become very religious in the latter part of her life, and Mrs. Jackson, not relishing this revolution of sentiment, began now to confer the friendship she had entertained for the mother to the daughter.

One Sunday evening while Lady Walter was absent, Byron's noble pander called on Miss Bellamy, and told her, that his beloved Miss B. was in a coach at the end of Southampton-street, and wished to speak with her. Without either hat or gloves, she ran to the coach, and before she had time to look round, was hoisted into it, when the coachman drove as fast as the horses would gallop.

Her reproaches and anguish were regarded with equal indifference, and the coach stopt in a lonely place, at the top of North Audley-street, fronting the fields. Here the Earl left her in his own house, and went, as he said, to prepare a lodging for her. This was at a mantua-maker's, in Broad-street, Carnaby-market. He assured her she was a woman of character, and asserted, by the most
dreadful

dreadful imprecations, that no violence was intended.

Determined to wait the result, his Lordship soon returned, and with him her own brother. This was more than she expected, and the most welcome sight she could have seen. She flew to his arms, but he repulsed her from him.

This was too much for her sensibility, which had already been deeply wounded. It deprived her of all sensation, and on her recovery she found herself with an old female servant, who told her she had orders to carry her to the lodging which had been prepared for her. She was then told by the old woman, that her ravisher had got a sound thrashing from her brother. But supposing Miss Bellamy had consented to the elopement, he had declared he would never see her more, but leave her to her fate; that he, moreover, threatened the Earl with a prosecution, and that the Earl, intimidated, gave orders to remove her from his premises as soon as possible.

Her brother, who had been long expected from sea, had, on his return, got to the top of Southampton-street just as the coach was driving off with his sister, and had run to rescue the person thus abused, not knowing who she was; but not able to keep up with it, he proceeded to Mrs. Jackson's, who immediately, on seeing him, cried out to fly to his

his

his sister's relief, as Lord —— had that instant run away with her. He went directly to the Earl's house, but not finding him at home, kept within sight of the door till his return, when he treated him as he deserved. He next waited on Lord Byron, who, with great assurance, denied all knowledge of the matter. Confiding in the assertions of her undoer, he conceived a disgust for his sister, whom he abandoned from that moment, and left without protection.

The person to whose care she was now committed, happened, by a very strange accident, to be her own mantua-maker; who very obligingly, procured her necessaries, and did every thing in her power to comfort her.

In spite of all this good treatment, care, and attention, her situation was now wretched and disconsolate without example. Notwithstanding her innocence, she found her mother inexorable to every application; and Mrs. Jackson was not within her reach. Her Irish kinswoman kept up the aversion which had been conceived against her, and her brother had left town.

This flung her into a fever, which endangered her life. As soon as she recovered, she set out on a visit to a female relation of her mother's, who lived at Braintree, in Essex, and whose name was Clarke. A few months before, a sister of this Lady had left Miss Bellamy

Bellamy three hundred pounds, on condition she never went on the stage; but her engagement at Covent-Garden having disannulled this legacy, it never was claimed.

She was prudent enough to go to the country without any finery, which pleased Mrs. Clarke, who was a Quaker; and concluded from Miss Bellamy's dress, that she had adapted the same principles. Without any enquiries, therefore, her legacy was cheerfully paid down; and the happiness she enjoyed among these plain honest people, recovered, in some degree, that tranquillity which she had so lately lost. Her health was also re-instated, and the apothecary, who had attended her, made a serious offer to her of his hand.

It was on a visit, in company with her relations, to this man's house, that the well-known Zachary Moore disconcerted the felicities she had found in her retirement. On finding her not known to the company, he blabbed who she was.

This man had been once possessed of an income of twenty thousand pounds per annum. His steward, who had cheated him of the whole, offered to return it, on condition that he would marry his daughter. Moore had the romantic generosity to spurn his proposition; but the only reward he had, was an ensigncy in a regiment that was ordered for Gibraltar.

This discovery, though by no means intended, had a most unfortunate effect on Miss Bellamy's present happy situation. Mr. Clarke warmly espoused her cause, on being told of the treatment she had received. This filled his wife with so much jealousy, that it was impossible for Miss Bellamy to continue longer in her present situation.

Next morning, therefore, from the disposition of the family, and from an altercation between her and Mrs. Clarke, she took a sort of French leave, and went on invitation, to visit a young lady of the name of White, at Ingatstone, who, however, she found was gone from home.

She went in consequence to a farmer's, in the neighbourhood, where she waited Miss White's return from London. Here, as she ruminated one day in the fields on her awkward and forlorn situation, her mother appeared to her in a manner so sudden and unexpected, that she took her at first for an apparition.

This was a tender scene. The parent who had condemned her daughter unheard, and the daughter who, without any crime, or even imprudence, had lost a parent, and been herself lost, recovered, and in one fortunate moment reconciled! Such an interview is one of the happiest enjoyments we experience in the whole circle of human life. But for these bitters we should have no relish for the sweets,

sweets, which are always an ingredient in the most nauseous draughts which fortune presents to our lips.

This meeting from her mother, produced a material alteration in the rural situation of Miss Bellamy. While she continued all alone, without friends or finery; while she contented herself with neatness and cleanliness, the rustics among whom she resided, admired, esteemed, and caressed her. But in consequence of assuming the dress and gaiety of a fine lady, she was regarded only with a distant sort of civility, mingled with aversion and contempt. And she observes on this particular, that we may learn with certainty, from these rustics, the proper criterion of simplicity in dress and manner, especially as connected with innocence of heart.

Had she known what was to follow these happy plains, she would not have forsaken them. But we are blind to futurity, and then very heedlessly sacrifice the substance for hope. This was very literally her case. A thousand motives urged her to return to the stage. Rural walks, as she elegantly expressed it, moss-grown leaves, spreading trees, books, and contemplation, lost all their charms. The prospects she had so frequently viewed with delight and extacy, were no longer pleasing to the eye. The stillness of a country life grew insipid and tiresome. She had no longer any pleasure in all the
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delicious viands, the nut brown ale, or the fresh gathered fruit which decorate and enrich a rustic table. But she anticipated, in imagination, all the splendid scenes in which she was going once more to be plunged, and exchanged, with a sigh, peace, retirement, and safety, for real dissipation, folly, noise, pain, and danger.

C H A P. IV.

AN IRISH ENGAGEMENT, AND SEVERAL SUBSEQUENT ADVENTURES.

LADY Walter set out immediately for London, whither she desired her daughter to follow her in a few days; who, on her arrival in town, where she found much scandal had been propagated against her. Mr. Sheridan was at that time Manager of the Dublin Theatre, and had come over to England to engage performers. For many reasons, Miss B. was advised to accept of the terms offered her by this Gentleman. She stipulated with Mr. Sheridan only for one character, "Constance" in King John.

Mrs. Jackson had now left her husband, and married an Irishman, of the name of Kelly. Lady Walter was consequently desirous of accompanying her daughter to Dublin; so that both Ladies joined the company, whom Mr. Sheridan had agreed to

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frank. This company of itinerant players, thus mustered, consisted of Mr. Sheridan, Mrs. Elmy, Lacy, her admirer, a Mr. Morgan, in the last stage of a consumption, Lady Walter, and Miss B.

Having waited several days at Park-gate, where the wind was contrary, it was agreed to go on for Holyhead. One incident which happened to them on the road is worth relating, as it shews, in striking colours, the force of strong professional habits.

Just as they ascended the stupendous rock Penmanmowr, they were overtaken by a violent storm, when the facetious Mrs. Elmy fell from her horse. The road would not admit two horses abreast. Her fall of course, impeded the progress of all the company behind. Some Irish Gentlemen, who by this time had joined them, instantly dismounted, and flew to her assistance. But to their surprise and astonishment, she would not suffer herself to be moved from the ground, till she had repeated the following lines from Jane Shore.

Fall then ye mountains on my guilty head;
Hide me ye rocks within your secret cavern;
Cast your black veil upon my shame, O night,
And shield me with your sable wings for ever.

No other accident happened to them worth relating, during their journey, except that Miss B. made a new conquest of one of
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the gentlemen who fell in with them, and whose name was Crump. This man having got her by herself, asked her if she was in love. "O yes, violently," said she. "Are you really attached for ever? It would perhaps be deemed impertinent, were I to presume to ask with whom. I do not think it can be of any service to you, but whether it is or not, I will gratify your curiosity, *it is with myself.*"

On their arrival in Dublin, Lady Walter waited on Dr. Walker, a physical gentleman of great reputation, and eminent in his profession. He had married an intimate acquaintance of her Ladyship's. Their reception was so agreeable, that they staid in the Doctor's house till they could accommodate themselves to their minds.

Miss B. thought it incumbent on her, to pay her respects as soon as she could, to Mrs. O'Hara, Lord Tyrrawley's sister, whom she had not seen since she was an infant; who received her with great kindness, and by whom she was introduced to the first circles in the country. Mrs. Butler especially, conceived such a liking for her, as to espouse her cause without reserve, and to support her with all her influence. She also recommenced her acquaintance with Miss St. Ledger, one of the young ladies whom she had formerly known while she lived at Mrs. Jones's, in St. James's-street. Thus, from

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having

having no female acquaintance in London, she was now in the prospect of getting very honourably introduced to the most genteel and fashionable company in Dublin.

In no period of its history, was ever the Dublin Theatre so ably appointed, or so well managed as now. Mr. Barry had figured in the character of Othello the preceding winter. Mr. Garrick also joined the company from some pique he had taken at the managers of the London Theatres. Three such capital actors as Barry, Garrick, and Sheridan, had seldom met before. Garrick and Sheridan agreed to act Shakspear's characters alternately, and to unite their strength in every performance. In the Orphan, Garrick performed Chamont; Barry, Castalio; and Sheridan, Polydore. In the Fair Penitent, Sheridan took Horatio; Garrick, Lothario; and Barry, Altamont. The latter was so ably sustained, that it became of as much consequence as either of the other. Miss B. was obliged to perform almost every night, and in parts which she had no time to study. The approbation, however, which attended her endeavours, excited her to do her best. And that she might not neglect her profession, or the agreeable society of her friends, she scarcely allowed herself that portion of rest which nature requires.

When the tragedy of King John was to be played, in which the Manager and Roscius were

were to play the King and the Bastard alternately, Garrick objected to Miss B. in Constance, as the late Mrs. Kennedy, though nearly of the same age, being hard favoured, looked older, was the only person who could act Prince Arthur.

This enraged Miss B. to such a degree, as she had set her heart on Constance, that she flew to her patroness Mrs. Butler, who resented her treatment, by exerting herself among the people of rank so effectually, that notwithstanding Garrick's popularity, the receipts of the house on this performance, did not amount to forty pounds.

Miss Furnival, however, who, at Garrick's request, had played Constance, was now obliged to yield that part to Miss B. who had the pleasure of seeing the house prodigiously crowded, and of receiving, from the audience, the warmest marks of their approbation.

Mr. Garrick had two benefits, and on fixing on Jane Shore for the one, he asked Miss B. to act that part, which, however, she declined. He then applied to Mrs. Butler, to whom he knew Miss B. could refuse nothing. He also wrote the following laconic epistle:

TO MY SOUL'S IDOL, THE BEAUTIFUL
OPHELIA.

*If you will oblige me in this, I will write you a
goody goody Epilogue, which, with the help of
C 3 your*

your eyes, shall do more mischief than ever the devil or the flesh has done since the world began.

The fellow, to whom this note had been delivered, sent it by a common porter, who, not knowing what to make of the address, thought it was intended merely as a jest. His master, who was a newsman, very properly put it in the papers. And it afforded all Dublin a very hearty laugh, at Garrick's expence, next morning. These applications, notwithstanding this ridicule, had the desired effect. The houses at Garrick's benefit were great, and from the generosity of the Irish, his emoluments for that winter, must have been very considerable.

He was, during the remainder of the season, much at Colonel Butler's, whose lady interested herself thus nobly in behalf of the Theatres. An anecdote of this lady's humour, on Garrick's leaving Ireland, deserves to be recorded.

Some days before his departure for England, he called on Mrs. Butler, in company with her daughter and Miss B. and told them he should go for London next day. Mrs. Butler on this went abruptly out of the room, and left Roscius in conversation with the young ladies. She instantly returned with a sealed packet, which she gave into his hands, enjoining him in a very solemn manner,

ner, not to unseal it till he had passed the hill of Howth.

This mysterious conduct, notwithstanding Mrs. Butler's character and delicacy, had a very equivocal appearance. He was no sooner gone, however, than she disclosed the secret. The present she had made her visitant, was nothing more than Wesley's Hymns, and Dean Swift's Discourse on the Trinity. And to a man, so vain and attached to money as this inimitable actor undoubtedly was, this jest was not ill contrived.

Next winter Miss B. went on with the same applause which she had attracted in the former. One evening, as she happened to sit next Lord Chief Baron Bowes, she was taken by a gentleman just arrived from London, for his Lordship's daughter. The scheme struck her from this incident, of imitating his Lordship in Portia, as the company were then reviving the Merchant of Venice. And she succeeded so well in her intention, that she went for the remaining part of the season, by the name of the young Chief Lord Baron.

When the manager brought forward Cleopatra, he wished to see Miss B. appear in a dress suited to the luxury and splendour of that voluptuous princess. Miss B. not less anxious borrowed the jewels of her patroness, Mrs. Butler, who increased

increased the loan by all she could collect from her acquaintance.

This gorgeous apparel was altered to suit Miss B's size and shapes, under the inspection of her maid servant. In an evil hour, Miss Furneval, who envied Miss B's finery, passing the place where the robes were preparing, and seeing the door open, and all the operators absent, carried off the whole paraphernalia. Miss B's servant detecting the theft, flew to the rescue of the dress; and, but for a seasonable interference, had punished the culprit with her own hands. Miss Furneval, however, kept her rival's suit, and made her appearance in the character of Octavia, while the Queen of Egypt was dressed in plain white sattin. The manager and the audience, were equally astonished and confounded at the contrast. And Mrs. Butler exclaimed aloud, "Good heaven, the woman has got on my diamonds!" Every body concluded the lady had been robbed, and the whole house instantly became a scene of confusion. Poor Miss Furneval was driven from the stage, and the audience waited with patience till Mrs. Emly had dressed to finish the part.

A gentleman flushed with liquor, shewed his approbation of Miss B. by putting his lips to her neck as she passed. She instantly turned round, and gave him a slap in the face. Violent as this chastisement appeared

peared in a young lady of acknowledged delicacy, and before such a company, Chesterfield, who was still Lord Lieutenant, and then in the house, rose from his seat, and applauded her for some time with his hands. And the gentleman, whose name was St. Leger, made a public apology at his Lordship's request. At night, she received a peremptory message to repair immediately to Mrs. Butler's, after the play. Miss B. obeyed the summons in the same dress in which she had acted; and just as she entered one door of the parlour in which the ladies were sitting, the gentleman who had been drinking in the dining-room, entered the other. She could not help observing a very uncommon degree of stiffness among the females, by whom she had formerly been so much caressed. Even her aunt Mrs. O'Hara, appeared cold and disgusting; and told her in a whisper, that a few minutes would determine whether she would ever notice her any more. At that moment a gentleman of comely figure, genteel address, and gay apparel made his appearance. To him the ladies seemed also not a little serious and demure.

Miss B. however, attracted his attention, and he made up to her with all the ease and familiarity of a man of gallantry. And she supported the conversation with him for some time in her usual manner, but on Miss

Butler making up to Miss B. he went immediately to Mrs. Butler and whispered who she was. "You who have known her in private," said Mrs. Butler aloud, "cannot but know her in public." He persisted in the same low tone, that he never saw her before in his life-time, and now found himself much interested in the enquiry. "For shame," Mr. Medlicote, returned Mrs. Butler, as audibly as before. "This is the very young lady, whose character you so cruelly destroyed at dinner."

The fashionable Bragart on this detection of his impudent aspersions, slunk away like a guilty thing; and Mrs. Butler apologized to Miss B. by telling her how foully she had been traduced, and that there was no other way of effectually disappointing the slander which might have been thus circulated against her reputation, had he seen her first at the theatre. For then, how could his falshood have been exposed and refuted?

This incident made great impressions on Miss B's mind, not only from the danger she had thus escaped, but likewise from the scandal which had formerly been propagated to her disadvantage, though without any more foundation in fact than that which had just been suppressed. These reflections operating strongly on a heart full of sensibility, threw her into a fever which confined her some days.

It

It was about this time, that the manager resolved to admit no gentlemen behind the scenes. The temerity of St. Leger, facilitated this necessary reform, but the introduction of it was attended with some inconvenience.

A drunken fellow of the name of Kelly, braved the order, and going behind the scenes, insulted the actresses in a brutal manner. This Mr. Sheridan resented, and had the indecent aggressor turned out by force. The fury which he felt on this mortification, disposed him to make a party among those of his own complexion; and while the play was going on, which that night happened to be *Æsop*, an orange or apple was thrown at the manager as he acted *Æsop*, so well aimed, that it dented the iron of his false nose which he wore, into his forehead, and put a stop to the performance. And Kelly, who had produced all this disturbance, got himself a good drubbing from the manager, of whom he had gone to demand the satisfaction of a gentleman; at the same time that he had a sword by his side, though he was prudent enough not to draw it in his own defence.

This, however, was nothing to what happened next evening, at the representation of the *Fair Penitent*. The moment Mr. Sheridan appeared in *Horatio*, the bucks as they are termed, rose, and cried out with

much violence, "out with the ladies, and
"down with the house." When the rioters
leaped upon the stage, Sheridan was obliged
to retreat and save himself. Disappointed
in not finding the object of their revenge,
they broke open the wardrobe, and stabbed
with great ferocity, the stuffing of poor
Falstaff. In searching for the manager, they
ransacked even the ladies dressing-room,
where they found Miss B. But she had
spirit enough, notwithstanding the alarm
she was seized with, from the general con-
fusion, to insist on their leaving her;
which after lifting up the covering of her
toilette to see whether Sheridan might not
be there, they submissively obeyed, and
retired.

The college boys, as the students were
called, with whom Sheridan was a great fa-
vourite, resolved to avenge his quarrel, as
well as to shew their resentment at being de-
prived of their usual amusement. The
theatre, in consequence of this disturbance,
being shut up for some time by order of the
magistrate, they invited or decoyed Kelly,
Fitzgerald, and some others of the ringlea-
ders to partake of a breakfast at their college,
where they took an opportunity of drench-
ing them very liberally from the pump,
which they said would keep their brains cold
enough to defend themselves against the suit
which

which that very day was commenced against them by the manager.

This very extraordinary emergency in the pleasurable world, made as great a noise in Ireland, as a change of ministry would have done in England. Colonel Butler's family were in the country, and alarmed for their favourite actress, wrote a pressing invitation for her to follow them. The perturbation of her spirits, however, produced an illness which rendered it impossible to her to move.

This interval was also rendered peculiarly afflicting, both to Lady Walter and Miss B. by the death of their good friend Dr. Walker. This valuable physician laboured much against burying the dead so soon after their decease, as is the custom in that country. He wrote a book to open the eyes of the public to this great evil, which he entertained himself a presentiment of suffering. It seems Lady Walter had made him a promise of preventing it, in case she survived him; which, however, she had not in her power to fulfil. But at her desire, the corps was inspected after it had been interred. The body, though totally deprived of life, was said to have been turned on one side, and his arms to have bled afresh.

This incident, connected with the frequent shocks she had lately received from her professional situation, and especially the persecution she endured from Mr. Crump, who had

had got acquainted with them in their way to Ireland, and had kept up a close correspondence with Lady Walter ever since, for the sake of her daughter, very sensibly affected Miss B's spirits, and produced the greatest alteration in her temper. Her mother was very solicitous to know the reason; and on Miss B. opening her heart, and candidly avowing the cause, she was satisfied, as there was no intrigue or love affair at the bottom of it that might cross her intentions in favour of Mr. Crump, whose interests she had heartily espoused.

Miss B's generosity to the celebrated family of the Gunnings, does as much credit to the humane sensibilities which influenced her conduct, as disgrace to the ingratitude, by which, though Providence put it so much in their power, she has been treated by them. Her Grace the Duchess of Argyle, little consults her credit with posterity, if she does not step forward, and either apologize for such a flagrant violation of humanity, or state such facts as may forever suppress so gross a slander. For what avails her character, for the private charities attributed to her among a few indigent Highlanders, whom no body knows, while such an anecdote as the following continues on record against her. How can Lord Coventry reconcile it to his conscience, or the world, if Miss B's allegations concerning
the

the pecuniary transactions between her and his late Countess be true. Is it possible, or why is it not contradicted, that a note of her Ladyship's remains, to this moment, unpaid, in the hands of a wretch starving for want.

When Mrs. Gunning was in circumstances of the utmost distress, without friends or subsistence, a prey to the rigid executioners of inexorable creditors, Miss B. obeying implicitly, the liberal impulse of her own heart, flew to her assistance, took her with her two daughters to her own house, cherished them as her relations with food and clothing, suited to their rank in life. All this she did, when every friend of this unfortunate family stood aloof. The subsequent celebrity of the present Duchess of Argyle, and the late Countess of Coventry, renders a remark of Miss B's of some consequence in this place. Maria, the elder, was all life and spirits; while Miss Betty, the younger, who has been honoured with a longer string of titles, perhaps, than any woman in the world, was always of a more solid, reserved, and prudent demeanour. Gladly would we add, that these ladies, who continued so long the toast of the fashionable world, were as remarkable for the dignity and tenderness of their nature, as for their elevated situations and personal attractions. But for this we must refer the reader to the sequel of Miss B's melancholy tale.

Shortly

Shortly after the opening of the Dublin Theatre, the famous Woodward joined the company. *Foote*, of facetious memory, about the same time, arrived *to give tea*, as he termed an exhibition, in which he endeavoured to take off all the most celebrated and popular performers in both kingdoms. Woodward finding himself attacked by Aristophanes, got up a piece in his own defence, which he called *Tit for Tat*, or a Dish of Chocolate. This had such a run as drove his rival to England. The piece, however, was such a favourite with the public, that it was continued during the benefits, and Woodward had ten guineas for each exhibition.

Though a shyness subsisted between Miss B. and this genuine son of humour, who had offered her his hand, but was rejected, they both found it convenient to be professionally here on good terms. In the *Careless Husband*, her Lady Betty Modish was no bad counterpart to his Lord Foppington. The manager, however, was afterwards obliged to appear in parts which but ill-suited his rhetorical and formal manner. This, notwithstanding the patronage of the public, as it frequently threw a languor and uniformity over the whole exhibition, so effectually chagrined the lively Miss B. that she determined on returning to London.

This resolution was much accelerated, by a manœuvre in managing the receipts of the Theatre.

Theatre. The Treasurer, in stating her account, charged seventy-five pounds for orders issued at the express desire of the Manager. A dispute consequently took place between her and Mr. Sheridan, and she absolutely declined all farther connexion with his company. The Treasurer waited on her next day with the balance of her account, offering to pay the whole if she would accept of a new engagement; but her choice was made.

Lord Tyrawley's return from his embassy at Russia, likewise hastened their departure from Ireland, as he was then on his way to pay the last duties to his sister Mrs. O'Hara. Miss B. now, therefore, had only to take leave of her friends, which she did with an aching heart, as she had little probability of ever seeing either Miss Butler or her aunt again. The illness of the one was thought mortal, and the age and infirmities of the other visibly precipitated her to the grave. Her lovely visitors the two Miss Gunnings, were also by this time become peculiarly dear to her, especially the elder, whose archness and vivacity was somewhat similar to her own turn of mind; but of all others, Miss Butler was the friend of her bosom, for whom she entertained the tenderest esteem, and is likely to cherish it while she lives.

From all these valuable acquaintance, fate destined this unhappy woman to tear herself

herself away. The felicities of the present, powerful, numerous, and flattering as they were, could not restrain her from plunging into those depths of misery which she only survives, as an awful lesson to others. The web of life is wove by an invisible hand. We frequently find ourselves entangled beyond the reach of human assistance, but see not, for what wise and benevolent purposes, the ordinations of Providence are thus retrograde to our wishes.

C H A P. V.

MISS B. RETURNS TO LONDON; IS RECONCILED TO HER FATHER, AND ELOPES WITH METHAM.

LADY Walter seemed most to regret her leaving Mr. Crump. A great intimacy subsisted between them. He advised her to purchase Irish linen with what money they had saved, which was by this time, and Miss B's success, a pretty large sum. Mr. Crump's advice was embraced, and it turned out to advantage.

They had an interview with Garrick immediately on coming to London, who received them with great politeness, but declined engaging Miss B. as all the principal female characters in Drury-lane, were engrossed by Mrs. Cibber, Mrs. Clive, and Mrs. Pritchard.

Rich

Rich was then at Cowley, which had formerly belonged to Mrs. Montford, afterwards wife to Mr. Vanbruggen, who was unfortunately murdered, as he escorted the famous Miss Bracegirdle from the Theatre.

The history of Mrs. Vanbruggen is tender and tragical. Her first husband left her in the bloom of life, of great susceptibility, and surrounded with lovers. The ballad of Black-eyed Susan, one of the sweetest lyrics in the language, was written by the celebrated Gay on Mrs. Montford.

Her second husband promised to be one of the first actors in the world. And there is no arriving at the head of any profession, without a singular degree of excellence. Poor Vanbruggen, whose merits deserved a better fate, fell a victim to the gallantry of his nature.

His widow, for the second time, lost her husband. Lord Berkeley attached himself to her; and, as a proof of his affection, bequeathed to her Cowley, that seat of the Muses, and three hundred a year, on condition she never married. The most susceptible minds have sometimes laid their survivors under this illiberal and whimsical injunction. But why should the dead have power to preclude from those pleasures which the living only can enjoy?

Booth, that very capital actor, whom even Quin is said to have studiously imitated, soon became

became dear to her. Him she preferred to numbers who were candidates for her affections. He was the man of her heart; but she could not marry, without losing what he was in no condition to supply.

Miss Santlow, at once an actress and dancer, was the intimate friend of Mrs. Vanbruggen, whose confidence she shared and returned. The well-known Secretary Craggs had a partiality for this lady, and left her such a fortune, as enabled her to live independent of the profession.

Booth, who was as interested as volatile in his intrigues, transferred his attention from one to the other, and soon obtained possession both of her person and fortune.

The perfidy of her lover, and the ingratitude of her friend, shocked the beautiful Vanbruggen to such a degree, that she instantly became frantic. Such is the melancholy effect, which wounded sensibility often produces in the best and most accomplished minds. In one fatal moment all her gaiety forsook her; and, from being one of the liveliest and most entertaining, she was changed into an object so completely wretched, as to extort compassion from the hardest heart.

The few intervals of reason which she enjoyed, but heightened this dreadful calamity, as the twinkling of a vapour in a dungeon only deepens the gloom that invades it.

On

On hearing one evening that Hamlet was to be performed, in which her Ophelia had always been greatly applauded, she artfully eluded the care of her servants and went to the theatre, where she behaved with decency during the performance, till the scene in which Ophelia makes her appearance insane. But then she flily got on the stage before the actresses who played the part. The performers were astonished and melted into sympathy. Never was any fiction more happily realized, or any character exhibited with such a powerful effect. Every eye that beheld her wept for her destiny, and the house regarded her through the whole scene which was inimitably sustained, with silent, awful, heart-felt sorrow!

Such was her last exertion. It was ominous. Her distemper had nearly completed her sorrows. And she marked her exit from the stage, by exclaiming, "It is all over." She probably presaged the event of that last effort. For in her way home, and without any struggle or emotion, she, like a lily drooping, bowed her head and died.

This mournful relation occurred from the mention of Cowley, for which Miss B. had so frequently sighed. But now she was obliged by her mother to visit a relation at Watford, in Hertfordshire. But it was in the neighbourhood of the grove near Cashio-
berry,

berry, and her friend Miss Leger resided there with her uncle Lord Doneraile.

Her new acquaintance in this retirement, were a comical groupe. Mr. Crawford, her mother's nephew, was a thorough paced Attorney, and Mrs. Crawford a jolly dame, who loved her bottle as well, at least, as her husband. Here she got acquainted with a Mr. Sykes, brother-in-law of Captain Belamy, whose name our theatrical heroine had hitherto gone by.

This therefore was not a situation much to her mind, and the time of leaving it at last elapsed. She then went to Cowley, where the manager of Covent-Garden, and his family, had fixed their summer residence. It was in this place she found a great variety of new characters, many of whom belonged to the theatre. Among these was a Mrs. Ward, from Edinburgh. She saw the manager determined to bring forward this woman, who possessed hardly another theatrical quality than a good face. She was nevertheless engaged.

As soon as Quin returned to town, Miss B. waited on him, apologized for the shyness of her conduct for some time past, and her rash expedition, and an immediate reconciliation took place.

Miss O'Hara, Lord Tyrawley's eldest daughter, came to live with Lady Walter, and her daughter. She also had recently in-

curring her father's displeasure. Miss B. was engrossed by theatrical business, and her mother had lately become so religious, as to forget every earthly concern, except that of uniting her daughter to her favourite Crump.

This was no small drawback on the happiness of Miss B. and Quin, notwithstanding the apparent reconciliation which had taken place, still kept aloof, and treated her with a shyness which he had not done before. It was by his advice, however, that she now made her appearance in Belvidera. But the house soon convinced her, that she was not so much followed as she had vainly imagined. Mr. Town, a gentleman, who at that time had great influence with the pit, and to whose exertions in her favour, she had strong obligation during her embarrassment on her first coming on the stage, now befriended her effectually. For, on hearing at the conclusion, another given out, but insisting on a repetition of the same, the audience joined him, and Venice Preserved was played four nights running, to crowded houses, and continued a favourite during the whole season.

Tamerlane was then generally played on the fourth of November; but Miss B. and Woffington were determined to support the credit of each other. One evening Quin sent for the former, to speak with him in his dressing-

dressiing-room. She stopped at the door, and like the best bred of the sex, listened a little to what was going forward. "Why," "my Lord, said Quin, we have Woffington "at the receipt of custom, and who bids "more. Ward, flatter than a half-baked "pancake; and Bellamy as cold as ice, and "as conceited as the devil." At that moment Bellamy entered. Lord Orford, Thomson, the poet, who was the shadow of Quin and Shenstone, were present. Quin told her he had a favour to ask. She replied, there was but one relative to the theatre which she could deny him. It is what you mean, said Quin, and you shall do it. No, Sir, returned the little Bellamy, too much conceit to play *Selima* to such a half baked pancake as Ward. This spirited retort overcame all the remaining umbrage of this singular humourist. He then explained himself on the subject, and convinced her that he was satisfied of her innocence and sincerity.

Her next character was that of Athenias, in Theodosius, in the performance of which she encountered new interruptions. Lord Byron began his persecutions anew, and even wriggled himself behind the scenes; and with all audacity of the order, avowed to the manager his intention of running away with Bellamy. Rich expostulated with him; but what mule is so obstinate as a lecherous Lord.

Lord. He was soon talked to in a language, however, more on a level with his feelings, than that of reason or humanity; and as courage is not always a collateral of brutality, he thought proper to retire. Thomson, at the same time sauntering carelessly behind the scenes, overheard one say to another, that he would speak to her to night, or shoot himself. It was immediately concluded, that it could be nobody but Byron. Quin sent for Bellamy the moment her part was finished. "No chairing to night," said he, "you must go home under my arm." Her chair, however, was ordered to proceed, as if she had been in it. But she and her body-guard were home before the chairmen, who said they had been stopped by a gentleman muffled in a great coat, who had lifted up the top, and throwing something into the chair, swore, that without a favourable answer, he was determined to destroy himself. The contents of the letter breathed nothing but love and madness, and were written by a young Cantab of great expectations, whose father Quin had some acquaintance of, and promised to speak to him on the conduct of his son.

They supped that evening at Bellamy's lodging, and had hardly finished this affair, when another letter was brought from Lord Byron; who, though lately married to one of the best and loveliest of her sex, addressed

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to

to Miss B. and offering her a settlement. Quin immediately answered his Lordship by the following card. "Lieutenant
 " O'Hara's compliments to Lord Byron,
 " and if he ever dares to insult his sister
 " again, it shall not be either his title or
 " cowardice, that shall preserve him from
 " chastisement."

On her playing Lady Froth soon after this in the Double Dealer, Montgomery, who was then Mr. Metham, and who had formerly, with more frankness than principle, avowed his incapacity of giving her either a coach or his hand, now made his appearance, and solicited an interview. The manner in which this connexion was renewed, after so long an interruption, did not pass unobserved by Mrs. Woffington and Mrs. Ward. Miss B's conduct seems to have convinced Metham, that he was not disagreeable to her; in consequence of which, an epistolary correspondence took place between them. This induced Miss B. to request O'Bryan, who had attended her from Ireland, and who had exerted so much spirit in rescuing her mistress's dress from Miss Furenval, to take care, that none of her letters might fall into her mother's hand. By a mistake of the servant who could not read, one of Crump's, to Lady Walter, was given to Miss B. which began in this manner, "Dear Madam, I believe your loved daughter cannot with-
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“stand the power of —.” She immediately threw the letter aside.

Next evening she appeared in the character of Alicia, and had no sooner finished, than she was introduced to her father by Mr. Quin, who told her of the death of his sister, who had behaved with so much tenderness and generosity to Miss B. in Ireland. Lord Tyrawley enjoined his daughter never to think of introducing him to any of the other ladies in her family, as he was determined to know none of them. He did the honour, however, of supping frequently at her house, and Quin was sometimes of the party; though he was too fond of his ale, his orange, and his good fat capon, to be there often, for his Lordship was singularly abstemious in the pleasures of the table.

Her connexion with Metham seemed to be growing daily into more and more intimacy. And at a masquerade, when she appears to be treated with friendship and respect by General Wall, the Spanish, and Comte Haslang, the Imperial and Bavarian Ambassador, the latter, who had been a frequent visitor of Lord Tyrawley's, introduced her to the former, well known for his gallantry and wit.

She had told Metham of her going to the masquerade, who had informed her what his dress should be; and in finding her, that her eyes would light him, and intuition would

point her out. After teizing him, however, the whole night with incessant levity and caprice, she found means of whispering in his ear just as she went to step into her carriage, "Where are those eyes, which, with your
" blessed intuition, were to render every
" other intelligence useless?" He had not been able to discover her the whole time, and these words left him in a state of distraction.

The death of poor Thomson happening just about this time, Miss B. sustained a part in "Coriolanus," which was acted in commemoration of its author. Quin's mode of pronouncing being of the old school, as it was called, a risible accident happened, which might have injured the success of the piece. The ensigns of magistracy, bore by the centurions of the Volscian army, were *fascēs*. These centurions are ordered by the hero to lower their ensigns in token of respect. But the men who sustained this part, imagining from Quin's sounding the *A*, open, that he said *faces* instead of *fascēs*, all bowed their heads together. The play, however, was represented with success; and Quin, notwithstanding his cynical apathy, sincerely shed tears. Miss B. was also much affected, as were all Thomson's acquaintance, who regreted the loss of a character so benevolent and inoffensive as he certainly was.

From the preference which Miss B. now evidently gave to Metham, a report was propagated at the Theatre greatly to her discredit

discredit in that matter. At the same time, Rich's duplicity in paying her only one half of the salary she expected, being discovered, two circumstances so disagreeable, disposed her to quit Covent Garden; but on taking Quin's advice, this design for the present was dropt.

Her attachment to Metham was soon perceived by Lord Tyrawley. He therefore took the earliest opportunity of interrogating her on the state of her affections. During this scene, so delicate and trying for a young girl of her age and complexion, it came out that his Lordship was a strenuous advocate for Crump.

This only inflamed her heart the more in favour of Metham, whom she could not bear to sacrifice to any consideration of duty or convenience. And it happened to her, as it has done to many others in similar circumstances, she was precipitated to her ruin, by the temerity and abortive eagerness of her friends to prevent it.

Quin, this season, chose for his benefit the very play in which Miss B. had in Ireland been deprived of her regalia. That part was now in the possession of Mrs. Woffington, who appeared enchantingly beautiful. Miss B. was dressed in a plain white sattin, as the disconsolate and rejected Octavia.

The house was crowded, as Quin was deservedly a great favourite with all people of

taste and fashion. The Duchefs of Queensberry was there, and desired Miss B. to secure boxes for her against her benefit; but her Grace did not say how many, which did not a little embarrass Miss B. Her Grace wished also to be shewn into the Green-room, which Miss B. engaged to do immediately when the performance concluded.

This she did; but on ushering in this lady of quality, the only sight which presented itself to her view, was Mrs. Woffington with a pot of porter in her hand, crying out, "Confusion to all order." The lowest canaille of the Theatre surrounded a table, covered with mutton pies, and seemed, by their manner and appearance, to realize the sentiment just toasted by the beautiful heroine.

Her Grace seemed petrified with astonishment, at a spectacle she so little expected. On recovering herself, she exclaimed, *Is all bell broke loose!* And hurrying to her chair, she had only time to forbid Miss B. returning back to such a scene, and to be with her without fail next day. When she waited on her Grace, the only thing that passed was about what had occurred in the Green-room, which this witty and discerning Duchefs had not forgotten, and which seemed to have considerably disgusted her with the actors and actresses.

Her

Her benefit came on soon after this, which, by Quin's advice, was the *Double Dealer*. She was honoured, on this occasion, with the patronage of the ladies of quality who had formerly espoused her interest so warmly. A circumstance the more pleasing, as her father seemed to enjoy it; but on many accounts it was far from turning out so lucrative as it had done before, or as she had probably expected it would.

One night Lord Tyrawley came abruptly into her room, and smiling, told her, he had gotten a husband for her. She trusted his Lordship had fixed on her choice. He then threw a letter on the table, desiring her to read that; at the same time he assured her, his word was pledged, which he would not break for her or the whole world. This menace was enough to rouse all the pride and obstinacy of the sex, who, however complaisant and obliging, are never to be directed, where even necessary to their own happiness, but by the gentlest means.

The letter was from Crump, who had settled the whole business with his Lordship; whom he farther informs, that he should be in town next evening, and intended himself the honour of waiting on him and Miss B. at her apartments in Tavistock-street. Mr. Crump added, that he had also delivered his Lordship's agency to Capt. Johnson, who

was sorry to lose his Lordship's agency, but the excuse was sufficient.

All this Miss B. without mentioning a syllable to her mother, reported immediately to Metham, who affected to regard the violence of a father with resentment, while the object of his wishes could only be the ruin of the daughter. So very consistently do your men of fortune and honour persevere, in accomplishing their schemes of seduction and profligacy.

The situation of Miss B's heart on this occasion may be conceived. She was the next evening to play Lady Fanciful in the Provoked Wife; and it must be owned, her feelings were not ill-suited, on this occasion, for such a part. And these were sufficiently kept alive by the presence of Mr. Crump, who, in the first row of the pit, was the first person who struck her eyes.

Nothing could more effectually promote the designs of Metham, who stood behind the scenes in great trepidation. At the beginning of the fifth act, as she crossed the back of the scenes, to get on the stage from the opposite side, he met her, and earnestly conjured her to speak with him in the hall. As she knew the prompter would not ring the bell till her approach, she complied with his request, and the moment she got without the door, he caught her up in his arms, and forced her into a coach, which stood there
ready

ready to receive her. The surprise naturally threw her into great agitation, but when this subsided, she did not very much blame her ravisher. Metham, however, affected to be under much apprehension of incurring her displeasure by such a violent mode of proceeding.

The coach drove to Leicester-street, Leicester-fields, where she was set down at a ready furnished house, and supplied with necessary apparel by Mrs. Studwick, the mistress of it. The Theatre was in an uproar, as the audience were now out of all patience; and Quin was at length obliged to step forward, and apologize for the incident which had interrupted the play. He politely begged their excuse for the whimsical girl of quality's absence, at the conclusion of the piece, as she had left Heartfree, and found an admirer who was made on purpose for her.

It is not difficult to conceive how this extraordinary step would affect her different connexions. The public prints detailed it in all its circumstances, with many and various fictions of their own. An appetite for slander is every where as craving and voracious as the grave.

Lord Tyrawley's forgiveness was not to be obtained. His Lordship even at this time of life, was a dangler after the beautiful Mrs. Woffington, whose envy of his daughter's theatrical abilities, was far from softening

his Lordship's resentment. Lady Walter was grown a very strict Methodist, and too holy to own her daughter after such a conduct. Poor Crump returned to Ireland without his errand; and Quin, who had always disliked the interference of paternal authority, in this case wrote to Miss B. that though in compliment to her noble father, he could not wait on her at present, he would visit her during the summer, when he supposed they would go to Yorkshire.

On writing to Miss O'Hara, she received her clothes and ornaments; but her mother kept what cash was in the house for her own use. Metham's fondness admitted not of any abatement, but seemed to increase with enjoyment. Miss St. Leger was courted by Major Burton, an intimate friend of Metham's, and this lady was often with Miss B. whom she encouraged in the persuasion, that Metham would certainly do her all the reparation in his power by an honourable marriage.

In a short time they went to York. The garden-wall of the house they occupied here joined to a monastery; and Miss B. commenced an acquaintance with the Chaplain of that religious symmetry. This was the more fortunate for her, as Metham was seldom at home, being a keen sportsman, and intimate with most gentlemen in the neighbourhood, who liked that sort of amusement.

The

The Marquis of Rockingham, the Earls of Burlington and Scarborough, and Lord Downe, shared his by turns. Grouse shooting engaged him in autumn, and hunting in winter. During seven months, they resided in Trinity-lane, York, he was not at home more than seven weeks altogether. She therefore enjoyed the company of the ladies in the convent as much as possible; where, and by whose conversation, all her religious impressions which she had received while yet a child in France, were revived, and afforded her much comfort and tranquillity.

One cannot help remarking on this part of Miss B's very extraordinary fortunes, that religion, like physic, is generally the last resource of even the gayest and most fashionable. It is a dose, however, which the infatuated patients never take but when they cannot do without it.

C H A P. VI.

MISS B. RETURNS TO LONDON, AND RESUMES
HER PROFESSION.

MISS B. was taken so ill in the latter end of the year, that her nurse thought her in labour. Metham, who was then at Ferrybridge, was immediately sent for. He insisted on having a man midwife; but Miss B's delicacy would not permit her on this occasion, so far to forget the decorum of her sex; and she improperly enough, perhaps, attributed

tributed her severe illness to this circumstance. The faculty exist by human imbecillity.

On the eleventh day she was, however, blessed with a son. Metham loved her to distraction, and continued almost frantic till she was pronounced out of danger. He wrote to her mother, most earnestly entreating her attendance, which she gave; and urged him with much or rather incessant importunity, till he promised her to make her daughter his wife. She was also exceedingly attentive to her grandson, who was named George Metham, whom she took to her own bed, even when he was seized with the small-pox, which she never had.

Quin now wrote her an account of the theatrical engagements which generally transpire about this time. He had not seen her, as he promised, during the summer; but he urged her return to town, the more especially as he had obtained an engagement for her, which would compensate, in some degree, for Rich's behaviour the preceding winter.

She liked her present situation too well, however, to relinquish it without reluctance; and she said every thing which her heart could dictate, to fix Mr. Metham to a place in which she had been so happy. All her entreaties were vain. He sighed for the riot and tumult of the metropolis; and much against her inclination, she was obliged once more

more to resume her profession. But it was the beginning of February before they left York; where, it seems, their expences had been so moderate, that they lived at about the rate of three guineas a week.

On their arrival at Lisle-street, Leicesters-fields, Quin took an early opportunity of waiting on them. Miss B. was glad to learn that Lord Tyrawley was gone for Ireland. This news was the more acceptable to her, that he had lately declared to Quin, that he never would be reconciled to Metham, though he married her, though in that case she might be excused. Quin also informed her, that ever since her engagement had been known, there had been an uncommon demand for boxes, and many enquiries. He was sorry he had not been able to avail himself of this circumstance in settling her terms with the manager, who would only be brought to allow her seven pounds a week, and a free benefit.

It was when she complained of her father's obstinacy to the late Charles Townshend, that he told her the following very singular anecdote.

He thought it happy for society that the mind of Miss B. was not inclined to mischief, as she might otherwise prove as dangerous as the celebrated Comtesse de — who was put to the torture on the Greve of Lyons, for destroying her eldest son by poison; that the

the younger, for whom she had a greater affection, might inherit the titles and estate.

This woman had endured the torture with the most astonishing firmness, and was seated on a chair to see her favourite son undergo the same trial. She regarded the agonies of her child with so much magnanimity, that an immense multitude of spectators were filled with admiration. The boy was then taken from the rack, and placed close by his mother till he should recover strength enough to relate the particulars of the crime for which she stood accused. The Comtesse with a suddenness and ferocity, full of her characteristic dignity and fortitude, drew from her bosom a knife, and plunged it into the heart of the exhausted youth; saying, at the same time, with a strong voice and a stern countenance, *Meurs fils! indigne d'une telle mere.* Die son! unworthy of such a mother. The consternation which seized all who witnessed this desperate action, was so powerful, that the executioner had not even presence of mind enough to snatch from her hand the fatal weapon, till she had buried it in her own bosom, while it reeked with the blood of her son.

On Miss B's appearance at the Theatre, it surpassed her most sanguine expectations. This, as she imagined, made Woffington almost burst with envy. But this is not the only time in which the judgment of Miss B. seems to have no other foundation than vanity,

nity, which is certainly the predominating feature in her picture.

She was obliged to play so often before the perfect establishment of her health, that she relapsed, and was pronounced by her physicians to be in a galloping consumption. The popular Quack especially, about the theatres in those days, was a Doctor Thomson, who had not received, perhaps, a regular physical education, but who made it the great object of his attention to relieve the patient by every means in his power. Quin valued this man for a virtue so little connected with the faculty. All his oddities, of which he had a large share, were those of humanity and good-nature. From his singular disposition and genius, Quin took a liking to him, and the great Mr. Winnington invited him to live with him. This added not a little to that scurrility, which was so liberally bestowed on him by those who had not his merit, but envied his success. Such was the physician to which Miss B. owed her recovery on this occasion. Metham's senses also returned with the health of his mistress.

About this time, and on account of some theatrical squabbles, as well as domestic inquietude, Mrs. Woffington took dudgeon, and set out for Dublin, where her beauty alone was an adequate certificate of her abilities. This actress had strong parts, but a low education. Her wit and spirits were
formed

formed on gross vulgarity. But these were qualities not likely to prove a disadvantage to her with an Irish audience.

On the approach of Miss B's benefit, she received a card from Miss Conway, desiring her attendance at Leicester-House next day, as their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales meant to honour her with their commands upon her night. The play which she chose for her, was the Siege of Damascus, and Quin was altogether at home in the part of Caled. But his Royal Highness being taken ill a few nights before the night of her benefit arrived, died in a few days. The house, of course, was shut up, and the benefits protracted; which also obliged the theatre to continue longer open than usual.

Metham, who contracted a violent attachment to the gaming-table, indulged this unhappy propensity the more, that Miss B. was so much engrossed by the concerns of the theatre. But at the conclusion of the season, she retired to a snug box at Knightsbridge, while he went into Yorkshire, where Lady Walter had continued with his son George. The Honourable Mr. Brudenell, Metham's intimate friend, advanced whatever money she had occasion for during his stay in the country; and she needed the less, as she saw but little company.

Being

Being rather more successful than usual among the rustic sons of the turf, on his return to town, he hired a spacious house in King-street, St. James's, set up an equipage, and lived in a style greatly exceeding his income. Metham's house was now the place of gay resort; and as Mrs. Dives's family visited Miss B. the ladies who knew her before her present situation took place, began also to return their visits.

The contest between Lord Trentham and Sir George Vandeput, for the city of Westminster, was then carrying on with the greatest violence by both parties; and Metham was so much interested in the success of the former, that public breakfasts were given at his house in his favour.

During the time of this tumult, Mr. St. Leger, who had formerly behaved to Miss B. with so much impropriety at the theatre, being just returned from France, came to pay her a morning visit. This young man of fashion was so inordinately fond of dress, as to render himself not a little ridiculous, notwithstanding his many accomplishments, which were much above mediocrity. He had at this time on a white furtout, with a crimson cape, a Parisian waistcoat, his hair *en papillate*, a feather in his hat, a *cauteau de chasse* by his side, a small cane hanging by his button, and two Italian greyhounds. Seeing Miss B. at the window, he hallowed

Bonne

Bonne nouvelle! Bonne nouvelle! Two dust-men with their cart hard by, stood gaping with amazement at so extraordinary a sight; quoth one to the other, Tom! smoke Mr. Redheels. St. Leger, who wanted for neither courage nor strength, instantly stepped up to the fellow, and chucked him fairly into his own cart. He then walked in with a *sang froid*, which could hardly be expected after such an adventure, and joined the company with as much composure as if nothing had happened.

While this gentleman was at the play one night, Woodward, who had seen him the same day in the Park, took care to have the very suit in the character he exhibited. An honest citizen who sat immediately before St. Leger, was astonished, and looked first at the player and then at the gentleman with much obvious confusion. St. Leger cautioned him against continuing to indulge his curiosity in a manner which gave him offence. He continued, notwithstanding, to enjoy this alternate stare, when St. Leger pulled off the citizen's huge cauliflower wig, and flung it on the stage; telling him at the same time, though he gave the fellow on the stage leave to take him off, he would suffer no tallow-chandler or soap-boiler to divert himself thus wantonly at his expence with impunity.

Miss B. learned from this gentleman, the melancholy tidings that his sister, the amiable

Miss

Miss St. Leger, her bosom friend, was in such a low state of health, that she had been obliged to go for the South of France. She too had been one of Thomson's patients. This physical adventurer, however, was now no more. Winnington, his patron, would have no other of the faculty called, lest they might refuse to act with him, and as he died under Thomson's care, his skill in the profession, by such as envied his success, was roundly impeached. The loss of his patron, connected with this and other circumstances, actually turned his brain, and he died a victim to the singular merit of persevering to act an honest part, in opposition, at once to his interest and reputation.

Metham's extravagance plunged him into new difficulties, which occasioned no small inconvenience to Miss B. On his revisiting Yorkshire, she took a house at Richmond, where her reconciliation with her father was effected. But she could not continue long here, as the expences she incurred were insupportable, and Lord Tyrawley was obliged to go to Gibraltar, of which he was governor.

About this time the French players, whom Monet had brought from France, were in a starving condition, and a subscription was made for them, in which Miss B. exerted all her influence. And a Madam Brilliant she even took into her own house; for notwithstanding

standing her occasional indigence, no accident ever deprived her of humanity and generosity.

It was from the same principle that she joined in a proposal of the Marquis de Vernieuil for engaging the assembly-room to perform some French plays. The two Miss Merediths with whom she was still intimate, spake French like natives, as did her two visitants. These, with herself and the Marquis, made a tolerable company. The Marquis paid for the room, lights, music, wine, and servants. It fell to Miss B. to furnish the wardrobe, fruit, tea, &c. &c. which involved her in a debt of three hundred pounds.

Monet, who had engaged the French players, was so pleased with Miss B's frankness and address, that he endeavoured to flatter her with the idea that by visiting France, she was likely to make a conquest of the Grand Monarque. This chimera filled her whole imagination. But Metham having been rather unfortunate at Scarborough races, she was obliged, at his desire, to give up her summer residence, and take furnished lodgings in Frith-street, Soho. This situation did not long suit her *penchant* for company; and being so dull in comparison with Richmond, which she had just left, it came across her to visit Tunbridge-Wells.

About

About this time a genteel lad, though very ragged, who lay lounging about her door, excited her attention and curiosity. The only intelligence the servants could get out of him was, that he was of Bruges in Flanders. She hired him, however, into her service from mere principles of humanity, and he soon gave proofs of his gratitude by his alertness and industry.

Her expedition to Tunbridge-Wells, is a strong picture of female levity. Involved as she was in a strange combination of untoward circumstances, she assumed the stateliness and parade of some Lady of Quality, and set out with a splendid equipage, to plunge among the gayest company without almost any money. The French king was still uppermost in her thoughts. But the delusion, like all other similar dreams, vanished in an instant. The moment she arrived, her friend Mr. St. Leger waited on her with a distant and cool formality, to acquaint her, that as he paid his addresses to Miss Butler, who with the family was at the Wells, he was desired by Mrs. Butler, to ask in a respectful manner, whether she was really married to Metham, or otherwise it would not be in the power of either the mother or daughter to take notice of her.

Miss B. received this message with extreme mortification, but frankly acknowledged what her real condition was. Mr. St.

St. Leger, probably affected at once with the circumstances she was in, and the candour of her nature, insinuated, that the Ladies might overlook her misfortune, and renew that intimacy which had once made her so happy. But that was small consolation to a heart thus roused, and embittered by a shock which she had so little expected, and which from the acuteness of her feelings, was calculated to wound her in the severest manner.

She, therefore, set out on her return next morning, with only one guinea in her purse, and a mind still more exhausted. When she dined at Bromley, she was reduced to apply to her maid O'Bryen, for her assistance in discharging the bill. This faithful Hibernian then comforted her mistress, by reviving her hopes of rejecting the offers of the French king. She enjoyed the confidence of Miss B. deservedly, and in this manner endeavoured to repay it. And her well-timed observation, coinciding with the levity of her mistress's temper of mind, was not without its effect.

An incident happened on her arrival at Frith-street, well worth repeating. While her Flemish boy stood at the door waiting the return of the messenger whom she had sent to Mr. Brudenell, as the extra horses could not without his assistance be discharged, two gentlemen passing by, wondered one to

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the other, whose it was. The boy pertly said, it was his mistresses. Ah! returned the same gentleman, I should be glad to know who is to pay for it. On the boy telling her what had passed, Why did not you, said she, acquaint him that it might belong to him?

This the boy literally did, as the gentlemen returned, who, without further ceremony walked up stairs, and proved to be the late Lord Holland, then Mr. Fox, and Mr. Calcraft, his secretary. After some trifling conversation about theatricals and the common incidents of the day, these gentlemen having got leave to pay a second visit, retired, but not till General Hall and Comte Haflang made their appearance.

These foreigners being the intimate friends of Lord Tyrawley, generously interested themselves in her pecuniary concerns. She had told them the state of her purse, and that she had twenty guineas from Mr. Brudenell. But on going up to the chimney-piece to view some figures of the Chelsea china, which the Comte had made her a present of, they discovered a bank bill. They immediately asked her if she knew any thing of the matter? She answered in the negative. It was a bill of fifty pounds, which she naturally concluded Mr. Fox had left her, in a manner the least likely to offend her delicacy. Her first resolution was to return it
immedi-

immediately ; but her friends dissuaded her, as she ought to consider it as only a compliment to those talents, from which the donor, with thousands, had received so much innocent amusement.

This evening she gained another fifty at cards. While at play, it was agreed between these two foreigners and Miss B. to set up a Pharaoh bank, in connection with the Marquis de Vernieul, and that each of the adventurers was to advance a thousand pounds.

It was now about the time for commencing the theatrical engagements. Mr. Lacy, from Drury-Lane, wheedled her from the Covent-Garden Manager, by a story which he had forged for the purpose, and which she only knew afterwards to be false. For the engagements had scarcely been signed, when Rich appeared with an offer greatly superior. She had only from Lacy three hundred pounds, but Rich proposed an engagement of three years, of five, six, and seven hundred pounds.

The scheme of the Pharaoh bank succeeded beyond all her expectations. She hired Gounda, the most eminent cook of his time, and also his wife, to attend her as her French woman. The Marquis of Granby seemed the only person in company, who could not lose his money with patience. The *petit soupers* occasioned by this sort of business, drew together all the gay, fluttering, un-

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thinking youth of fashion. The Miss Moystyns were generally of these parties. The eldest was particularly distinguished by a superior understanding; and without youth or beauty, their company was eagerly solicited by all people of taste. They were named from some peculiarities in their make, Crimp, Crump, and Crumpling.

About this time Miss B. lost her Irish maid O'Bryen, and regretted her exceedingly. But the duties of her profession engrossed her sole attention. Both Theatres opened this season with "Romeo and Juliet," in which Barry and Cibber in Covent-Garden, were rivalled by Garrick and Miss B. in Drury-Lane. As Miss B. one evening repeated the line Romeo, "O why are you Romeo!" a sailor from the upper gallery brayed out in a voice which made all the Theatre ring, "*Because Barry is Romeo in the other house, to be sure!*"

This contest was protracted so long, that the performers and audience were both tired of it. The advantage was, however, obtained by Drury, at last, though not without a great deal of private manœuvre and public puffing.

One evening Miss B. was told in the green-room, that an old lady and gentleman wished to see her. The moment they were introduced, the gentleman told her his name was Gansel; that he had a son a Captain in the

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Guards;

Guards; that the gout visited him so often, he could not retain his seat in Parliament; and that he and his lady were so enchanted with her performance, that they determined to cultivate her acquaintance. Extraordinary as this introduction was it had the desired effect. Miss B. went home with these good people, and supped with them that very night; and was equally charmed with their hospitality and the old man's good sense, which was heightened by a large and well selected store of theatrical anecdotes. She calls him a living chronicle, possessing at the same time, an heart singularly generous, humane, and sincere.

His wife was altogether at his command, and without any other accomplishment than the affairs of a family literally required. And happy had it been for Miss B. and thousands whom gallantry, fashion, and giddiness, ultimately leave to want and disease, had they never aimed higher than making a shirt, a cheese, or a pudding. These are the humble affairs of a good housewife, but they are generally coupled with health of body, peace of mind, simplicity and innocence.

It was the lot of this woman never to be long happy. This friendship, oddly as it was commenced, proved very agreeable for some time, though she found it in the result to be one of the most unfortunate epochas in her whole life.

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Metham, on coming to town, was greatly pleased with her success. He lodged at Deard's in Pall-Mall, and Lady Walter with the little boy, were lodged near Miss B's, who, on breaking up of the Pharaoh scheme, discharged her man servant, and hired a girl in the room of O'Bryen, just the reverse of that worthy creature who paid all her suit to Metham without minding, but as little as she could, the satisfaction of her mistress.

Her servants plundered her the more successfully, that she now lost her Flemish boy, whose fidelity had been of great use to her. But his father had come after him; and from him she learned, that the son in a quarrel with another lad of the same place, had plunged a knife in the breast of his antagonist, for which he had fled from Bruges, and that no account could be obtained of him till the father came to London. He thanked Miss B. for her attention and kindness, and entreated her to visit him in a very pressing manner, which she did some years afterward. He made her short stay as agreeable to her as he could.

All this time, Metham had not fulfilled his promise of marrying Miss B. Having, however, been frequently urged to an explanation of the matter by her mother, she took the first opportunity in her power of putting the question to him, without circumlocution or hesitation. He abruptly left

the room without deigning her an answer. She resented the indignity, by forbidding his admittance whenever he should call. But he instantly sent her a card to tell her, that Dives, his brother-in law, and himself, should dine with her that day, and requested they might find her alone.

When they came, however, there was a third person with them. It was an Attorney; and the intention of the visit, was to execute writings in her presence; in which it was settled, that in case Metham died without legitimate issue, the estates which he expected to recover from his father, and those he enjoyed by his mother, should devolve to Mr. Dives who had married his sister, and his heirs. Mr. Dives joined him in securing to Miss B. by the same deed, an annuity of three hundred pounds a year, and the sum of two thousand pounds to their son George.

Miss B. was not dissatisfied by this deed, till she understood, by her mother's construction of it, that Metham was prevented from marrying, and that Dives had effectually duped him that he might secure to his own family the whole of Metham's fortune. This opened Miss B's eyes to see her situation still more than ever; and she concluded the two brothers had contrived this artful scheme, only that she might be induced to give up
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her expectations of ever being the wife of Metham.

Notwithstanding her connection with Drury-Lane, her intimacy with Rich continued. Neither had she lost the good opinion of Quin, who regarded her rather with compassion than anger, as the dupe of artifice and duplicity. To him, therefore, she applied for advice on this matter; and being satisfied that Metham, of all others, was the man of her heart, he advised her for the present to acquiesce, and make his home as agreeable to him as she could. For as he could not marry her while his father lived, he might be disgusted by such an importunity as might betray her want of confidence in his honour. And while these circumstances prevented her absence from the Theatre, she could not assume his name. They did, for the most part, pass for married, and therefore the ceremony could not make much odds.

Though she was pleased with this advice, it ill corresponded with the impatience of her temper. And though she generally struggled to conceal her wishes in his presence, she could not at all times sufficiently suppress them. Her character received a stain, which nothing could blot out but marriage; and while the ceremony remained unperformed, her mind could not be at ease.

Her benefit was this season extremely lucrative. She was honoured with the patronage of the Effex family, the Lady Capels, and the Lady Keppels. The piece was "Tancred and Sigismunda," and she succeeded in this favourite character of Mrs. Cibber much beyond her expectations.

At the benefit of Sowden, the flatterer of Garrick, the following incident occurred. The Orphan was acted, Roscius was in Chamont, and Miss B. in Monimia. In the most pathetic part of the fourth act, she heard a voice muttering something which she could not understand, from the interesting scene that engrossed her attention. The sense, however, soon assailed her ears in more intelligible sounds. *Rumps and burs* were repeated audibly and distinctly. Roscius was still more disconcerted than Miss B. and they had nothing for it, but to conclude the dialogue with as much dispatch as they could.

As this exclamation proceeded from the balcony, it turned out, on enquiry, to be an honest city dame who had been lulled to sleep by the noise and bustle of the house, and who had been dreaming of her daily vocation. Miss B. however, had been so confused by this ridiculous occurrence, that she hurried out of the Theatre with all the expedition in her power, and left them to conclude as they pleased.

It

It was about the end of this winter, that she lost a valuable friend in the death of the amiable Miss Conway, who overheating herself at a ball, was helped to a glass of lemonade which occasioned an inflammation, of which she died with great agony in a few hours. It alleviated this inestimable loss a little, perhaps, that she had the mournful consolation of holding this most delicate and best of women in her arms while she expired.

Her other most interesting friend, Miss St. Leger, had just married Major Burton. But her health was still so precarious, that she durst not venture on returning to England. She, however, invited Miss B. to the South of France, but she was too ill to travel; and this summer passed, without producing any incident in her fortune deserving remembrance.

This season commenced in Drury-Lane, with the introduction of two new performers, Mossop and Ross. The one in the cast of parts belonging to Quin, who this winter retired from the stage; the other, in those of lovers and genteel comedy. Mossop's voice was pleasing, but his manner disgusting. Ross was blessed with a fine voice and an elegant figure, but he had neither sensibility nor industry.

These gentlemen were liked, but did not excite the public curiosity. And the Houses

were thin, except when the Manager performed, which he consequently often did.

The *Mourning Bride*, in which Garrick played, was this winter revived. But Miss B. had unintentionally offended him, by sending to Dr. Young to beg the favour of a reading of his new piece, the *Brothers*, during her illness. Garrick punished her, by teaching Mrs. Pritchard the part of *Zara*, and leaving the *Bride* to her own tuition. Notwithstanding this partiality, *Almeria* was greatly applauded as a piece of the most exquisite acting.

On Miss B's declining soon after this, a part prescribed for her by the Manager, he wrote to her in the following terms: "Since
" you have humbugged the town, I suppose
" you think you are able to do whatever you
" please. The liberty you have taken in
" asking to peruse Dr. Young's piece,
" is unwarrantable. And I will convince
" you, that I *alone* am the person to be ad-
" dressed in whatever concerns the Theatre.
" I shall find means to repay the contempt
" you have been pleased to show me."

To this very haughty and magisterial epistle, Miss B. answered, that she meant by the freedom she had taken no infringement whatever on his sovereignty, or in any degree to detract from his great consequence. It arose entirely from her acquaintance with the author. But though she could be directed
with

with the greatest ease, by complaisance, no man on earth should ever rule her with a rod of iron.

The first time she appeared in the green-room after these letters had passed, the Manager, with his usual address, accosted her thus: "Well, Madam, you are come at last. It was rather unfortunate for us, that the Doctor insisted on your being his heroine." She answered, without hesitation, that Mrs. Pritchard was better qualified for that species of acting which the character required than she was. Haughtiness was neither her temper nor her talent. She disliked it in others, and could not herself assume it without awkwardness.

On this principle she offered to give up the part, but the Doctor cried out, "No! no!" which did not seem to please the Manager, who appeared rather mortified, at the unexpected *sans froid* which Miss B. discovered on the occasion.

Miss B. when the piece was read, objected to the following line, as not very well corresponding with the delicacy of a fine Lady,

I will speak to you in thunder.

The author protested it was the most forcible line in the piece. Miss B. answered, that she thought it would be more so, if lightning was joined to it. This heated the good Doctor, who declared the Brothers

to be the best piece he had ever written. Miss B. pertly observed, "I am afraid, Doctor, you will do with me as the Bishop of Toledo did with Gil Blas on a similar occasion. But I cannot help reminding you of a Tragedy called the Revenge." Her heart smote her, however, for this petulance, to one whom she regarded with respect and esteem; and she applied all her powers of persuasion and address to procure his forgiveness, and work herself into his former good graces. And she succeeded so much to her wishes, that the Doctor invited himself to dine with her, but not till he had struck out the offensive line, in complaisance to her judgment.

That day Quin happened to be in town, and at the hour of dinner joined Garrick and Young. A circumstance of which, many people less vain than Miss B. would have boasted, as perhaps, three such wits cannot be found in any age or at any table in christendom.

The Doctor acquainted Quin with the fracas which had happened in the green-room. Quin replied with his usual humour, "Oh! Doctor, if you knew what that girl could do as well as say, you would not be surprised at any thing she did." Whether the wag meant this as a *double entendre*, or the facetious divine understood it in that light, the *deponent sayeth not*.

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When Moore's *Gil Blas* was played, it was condemned to oblivion the second night of its representation; but Mr. Town, who ruled almost every theatrical audience at that time, had influence enough to secure a night for the author, otherwise he had only got his labour for his pains.

Eugenea, translated from the French by Francis, who translated Horace, was their next essay. But though the strength of the house was exerted in its favour, it could only be dragged on for a few nights to empty boxes and a dead silence.

The *Alfred* of Mallet, made some amends for these abortions. Garrick represented the venerable Briton, with a manliness and dignity well becoming the character of that celebrated chieftain; Miss B. was less successful in *Elfrida*, as the part had only dress and situation to render it in any degree interesting.

Her indisposition and constant employ at the Theatre during this winter, left her little time to see much company. Metham, in particular, was very little with her, as his unhappy predilection for gaming, engrossed both his time and attention. So that with all his professions of regard for Miss B. he was generally at White's or some other Coffee-House, losing his money.

The thirtieth of January was Metham's birth-day, and as there could be no business at the Theatre, she proposed a gala for his

and her friends, in honour of it. Goundu was accordingly appointed to dress the dinner, and Robinson, the Confectioner, to furnish the desert.

Metham brought *Calcraft* in his hand, whom she had never seen before, but in company with Mr. Fox, as already related; and once or twice at the Theatre, where Lord Robert Sutton had introduced him to her. He sat next Metham at the bottom of the table. The dinner was admired; but the desert afforded some of the company an opportunity of complimenting Miss B's taste at the expence of her prudence. It was in an eminent degree extravagant, and it was obvious enough, that the company considered it as a sarcasm on Metham's situation.

Miss B. wished to divert this kind of animadversion, and observed with much pleasantry, that if her present extravagance should occasion her to visit the new building in St. George's-fields, she trusted some one or other of the company would release her. Metham immediately swore in a fury, that *she might rot there before he would*.

The company were petrified with confusion and astonishment. A profound silence ensued for above a minute. Calcraft then turning round to Metham said, I hope, Sir, you will not be angry with those that will.

In spite of this strange, unexpected interruption, she endeavoured to recover her spi-

rits, but in vain. There was no public place of resort open, and she was obliged to bear the fatigue of smothering her feelings, in complaisance to her guests, until three or four o'clock in the morning.

Metham, at the request of some of the ladies withdrew; Lord Downe, who was present, entertaining a suspicion that the insult was aimed at him, went also away as soon as decency would permit. But Miss B. has always declared, that while she continued her connection with Metham, this nobleman never breathed an accent which could be construed into love.

The moment the Gentlemen were gone, the Ladies endeavoured all they could, to exculpate Metham, and produce a reconciliation. But teized improperly by their solicitations, while her feelings were yet irritated by the insult she had received, and giving way to the violence of the passions by which she was agitated, she dropped upon her knees before them, renounced all connection with him for ever; and protested, in language the most solemn and peremptory, that she would refuse the most serious tender, even of his hand, and from that moment banish him from her heart.

Metham came next day, and by every submission which he could make, endeavoured to atone for the rudeness which he had committed. He imputed it to a momentary phrenzy

phrenzy which he could not controul, but which proceeded from the excess of his love. The implacability of her nature, however, was not to be subdued by concession, protestation or argument. She remained inexorable, and he left her almost frantic with despair.

The moment her company were gone she entered her chamber, but the pressure on her mind would not suffer her to shut her eyes. She therefore walked about the room, and as she approached the window, could see a man in the street as much agitated as herself. She was, however, too deeply absorbed by her own circumstances, to bestow a thought on his.

Metham, notwithstanding her obstinacy, did not give up his point. He pressed her at last, only that he might visit her as a friend. His companion, Colonel Sandford, had the address to persuade her to admit his visits on that footing. And to this she consented the more readily, that she had resolved never to enter into a tender connection with any other person, but to employ the whole of her subsequent attention on the duties of her profession.

She corresponded with her faithful monitor Quin, on this most interesting and delicate determination. He applauded her in strong language. He urged her to steadiness and perseverance in a principle which appeared

peared to him so laudable, and which in the issue, would turn out so convenient and advantageous to her.

A few days after this revolution happened to her, her maid brought her a parcel, which on opening, she found to contain ten bank bills of one hundred pounds each. She could not fix in her mind, on any body so likely or so able to make this munificent present as Lord Downe. But such an instance of generosity, could only come from some one greatly interested about her; she therefore concluded the donor could not long remain concealed, and determined within herself, on no account whatever to break into the sum, but to wait the event.

The first time Metham went to dine with her after this, she asked his friend Col. Sandford to accompany him. Calcraft came also along with them, as a great intimacy had lately subsisted between him and Metham. Mrs. Lane, second daughter of Rich, falling in accidentally, made also one of the party; and Miss B. regretting that she could not obtain places to see the new pantomime of Harlequin Sorcerer, Mrs. Lane made an offer of accommodating both her and the young Dives, who still remained with her.

Mr. Calcraft now proposed to the Gentlemen to go on a party to Oxford, on some pretext or another. His offer was readily accepted by Metham and the Colonel, who
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were both men of pleasure. This produced an event, which left Metham no longer in doubt, both that he had a rival and who that rival was.

C H A P. VII.

MISS B. FORMS A NEW CONNECTION, BUT NOT OF THE MATRIMONIAL KIND.

MISS B. kept her word with Mrs. Lane in attending on Harlequin, and Calcraft crouded into the same box with a thousand apologies for the liberty he had taken. She enquired why he had not proceeded to Oxford, and whether the Gentlemen who accompanied had also returned. An express had overtaken him, he said, at Salt-Hill, by which he was obliged to return to town on business of importance.

This story was easily believed by Miss B. He handed the Ladies to the carriage at the conclusion of the piece, and asked permission to wait on them home. Miss B. in compliment to his politeness, asked him to stay supper. He did so, and as there were neither coach nor chair to be obtained about two o'clock for Mrs. Lane, Calcraft offered his, which was in waiting, to the Lady; whose lodgings being considerably distant, he had a *tête-à-tête* with Miss B. till his chair returned,

returned, and which otherwise than by this incident he could not have obtained.

The conversation on this occasion, naturally turned on the behaviour of Metham to Miss B. and he had the address to put on an air of concern for the extravagance of his friend's temper, which, by precipitating him into a fury, had rendered him wretched.

Miss B. then showed him the bills for a thousand pounds which she had received. He was at too great a distance in her opinion, to form any serious design upon her. His apparent diffidence, his air of moderation, his affected frankness and affability, interested her credulity, and conciliated her confidence. She consequently asked him, whether he could judge by the superscription, from whom the money came. He was pleased by this instance of her confiding in his honour, and advised her to turn the bills into cash, without further ceremony or delay. For her part, she was satisfied for the present, that Lord Downe was the person to whom she was intitled for this seasonable bounty; which he had sent her with no other view, than to extricate her from those difficulties which it was natural to suppose she must suffer from her quarrel with Metham. Calcraft, from one thing led her to another; and by the freedom with which she had disclosed so material a secret to him, he presumed to teize her into confessions still more interesting.

interesting. He ventured to ask her, whether she was satisfied of Metham's intention to marry her. Her resentment for the injuries she had sustained from the madness of that infatuated Gentleman, stimulated her now to repeat the same rash protestation she formerly made, that she would not accept of his hand were he now to offer it to her. She added at the same time, and with an energy equally solemn and earnest, that she was determined never to enter into any similar engagement whatever.

The chair was now returned, and Calcraft took his leave for that night. She blames herself for continuing in this situation, all alone, with a man of gallantry, at the hours of two or three in the morning. Indeed, it was a risk which no woman of strict honour and decency would have run. And we suspect, that there is at least as much prudence as truth in the declaration, that after all these appearances, she had no idea that Calcraft wished to undermine the interest of Metham in her affection. The next night, however, she owns, this apprehension came across her mind. It was Mrs. Pritchard's benefit. The stage was crowded. There was consequently, a great bustle in the passages. Miss B. was insulted by a man in liquor. Calcraft, who was dangling at her heels resented the affront, and after some words, knocked the stranger down; who no sooner recovered from the stroke,

stroke, than Calcraft desired him to walk out with him. But Calcraft soon returning with a smile on his countenance, Miss B. began to suspect the drift of all the officious attention which he had paid her of late. This alarmed her the more, that she had engaged him to sup with her that evening. He behaved, however, with so much distance and respect before her company, and returned at so early an hour, that she secretly upbraided herself for having formed this rash conclusion.

Next morning as she took a walk in the Park, a servant of Metham's came up to her, and acquainted her that his master was come to town, and wished to see her instantly at his lodgings. She went immediately, but in her way found Calcraft, and the person who had offended her the evening before. He had been with this poor man early, and insisted on his either asking the fair one's pardon, or his fighting him. But the aggressor was not very fond of making any apology whatever to an actress. They were on their way, as well as Miss B. to Metham's, and all entered together. The stranger made an awkward apology, muttering something about the delicacy of an actress. Metham fired at this instance of disrespect, said to him with great solemnity, "Sir, that Lady is to be my wife." The man had hardly retired, when Metham turning round to Calcraft, he asked with an air of great superiority, what
right

right he had to enlist himself as Miss B's champion. This absurd and abrupt interrogation struck her anew. But she was not long kept in suspense about the cause. Metham had called at her house, and got intelligence of all Calcraft's visits and motions. Consequently, not only the *tête-à-tête* which had happened between Calcraft and her at so unseasonable an hour, but his walking in the street opposite to her chamber windows the night after their quarrel, had unfortunately come to his ears. This information, connected with Calcraft's sudden return to town, had awakened all his jealousy, and convinced him effectually of his new friend's perfidious intention of supplanting him in the heart of Miss B.

The altercation which ensued was more than she could bear. She fainted away. A challenge was the consequence. General Burton and Colonel Haywood were to be the seconds. What the result of this meeting was, or whether there was any duelling, has not transpired.

Miss B's benefit happened on the Saturday following. She had, therefore, too much business on her hands to suffer any part of her attention to be wasted on the difference of her rival lovers. *Venice Preserved* was the piece she made choice of, and it brought her a very crowded house, and excessive applause. Mr. Fox, who took a great concern

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in her fortunes, came after the play was over, to inform her what Mr. Murray, now Lord Mansfield, had said. For that great man's opinion, even in matters of taste at that time, was not without its influence on the public. After showing the greatest satisfaction with the performance in general, his Lordship concluded by saying, that he had come to admire his friend Garrick, but went away enchanted with Bellamy. Garrick was in the green-room when this intelligence was given, and it did not a little hurt his consequence; for he could not without jealousy and envy, bear even a sister near the throne.

Miss B. being longer a bed this morning than usual, from the fatigue of the preceding day, her servants were forbid to admit Metham if he come. But he was not to be denied; rushed into her bed-room with a look as frantic as a bedlamite, and asked her fiercely, if she would live with him? Her answer was in the negative, and as determined as ever. He then drew his hanger in a rage, and swore that if she did not live, she should die with him. The child of their affection playing about the room, screamed out, at Metham's fury and menacing gestures. This recalled a moment's tenderness. Miss B. had fainted away. He recovered her by his assiduities and attentions; but as soon as she could hear him, he tried by every kind of threatening and imprecation, to combat the resolution she had formed. Finding all his violence

violence and outrage unavailable, he had recourse to tears, entreaties, and all that the most sincere and riveted tenderness could suggest. Though this was by much the most likely way of conciliating her affection, it was her misfortune to resist all that he could either say or do. He solemnly offered to marry her immediately, and to atone for the offence he had given her, by the most unremitting attention to her inclination all the days of his life.

Still, however, she persisted in obstinately rejecting every offer he made. His phrensies returned with more extravagance than ever. She began in her turn to entreat and solicit him to leave her. He saw the trepidation to which he had reduced her. A gleam of pity once more came across him, and after obtaining her leave to return again in two hours, he left her.

He was no sooner gone, than she rung for her maid, and sent her on some frivolous errand to one of her female acquaintance, and told her she wished to compose herself a little till she returned. But she instantly got up, and putting on the first clothes she could find, ran out into the street in a state of distraction and anxiety, which it is impossible to describe. This happened on Sunday, as the people were coming from church; and by the wildness of her looks and other symptoms

ptoms of extravagance, which they perceived about her, conceived her to be insane.

She did not fly to her mother's, as that was the first place to which Metham, as she apprehended, would have recourse. But she went directly to Southampton-street, where she had lodged on her return from Ireland, and where the Gansels had taken up theirs. It was kept by a Mrs. Smith, to whose humanity she owed much on this occasion. She did every thing in her power to soothe and compose her guests on this occasion. She went immediately to Lady Walters, whom she acquainted with what had happened. There Metham was raving like a madman. He had been at Calcraft's house, concluding the scheme to have originated with him. But finding she was not there, he had continued his researches. Mean while, Calcraft, on hearing that she had fled, experienced nearly the same tormenting apprehensions which had rendered Metham thus delirious. He supposed, from putting together a great variety of other circumstances, that she had put herself under the protection of Lord Downe, as that nobleman possessed every attraction which could charm or captivate the sex.

Lady Walter promised Metham she would inform him of her daughter's return, as soon as she could discover it. She then waited on Miss B. whom she found in the utmost agony and

and distress. Her constant wishes had been, to see her daughter joined with Metham in the holy band of matrimony; and she could have pressed it now on Miss B. that it was actually within her reach, but that her mind was too much agitated. And from the danger which must have resulted from the frantic temper of Metham at present, had Miss B. staid any longer where she was, Lady Walter did not wholly disapprove of her precipitate retreat.

It was now passion week, and Miss B. being happily relieved from her attendance on the Theatre, agreed in company with Mrs. Smith, to visit the Gansels, at Donnalon-Park, where they were received by Mr. and Mrs. Gansel with the warmest cordiality. These people, with all that wealth, independence, and health could bestow, were yet unhappy. They had an only son, who would not comply with their wishes in marrying. And they were uneasy at the apprehensions of not seeing a fine paternal inheritance, descending by a straight line in their own family.

Col. Gansel, for that was the young Gentleman's name, joined them in the evening of the next day, after their arrival at Donnalon-Park, when it appeared how much his parents doated on him by their attention to him, and solicitude about him.

One day while they were at dinner, the old Gentleman was told, that a stranger wished

wished to speak with him. He desired that the Gentleman, whoever he might be, would walk in and make one of the company. The servant who carried this message, instantly returned with a note, acquainting him, that as the business was of a delicate and pressing nature, the writer begged to have an opportunity of seeing and speaking with him alone.

Mr. Gansel, after desiring that the company might not pay any regard to him, and that one of the four dishes then on the table might be kept for him and his guest, told them it was uncertain, from the note he had received, how long he might be obliged to stay.

This incident seemed most to affect the Colonel, who, on his father's withdrawing, seemed to change colour. The bell, however, was soon rung, and the dish which had been kept warm, ordered to attend Mr. Gansel and his guest. Mrs. Gansel leaving the company at the same time, was not long out; and on her return smiled at her son, and told him, that his father was in great good humour; and added, that he needed not be alarmed, as he was not the first son who had fallen in love without the consent of his parents. It seems this young man had for some time been privately married, and had but little hopes that his father would consent to the match, when known.

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After dinner, the company went to take a walk in the park and grounds about the house. The Colonel had brought an extraordinary white bull, as a present to his father. And in complaisance to him, as well as from motives of curiosity, it was proposed to view him, when a servant came with a message to Miss B. begging her attendance on Mr. Gansel immediately: she would much rather have remained where she was, but not willing to disoblige the old Gentleman, she obeyed implicitly his invitation; and to her inexpressible surprise, found Calcraft with him. Mr. Gansel rising up with his accustomed politeness and familiarity, took her by the hand and told her, pointing at Calcraft, that here was her protector from a madman; and that this was a Gentleman of honour, who proposed, with her consent, to make her happy for life.

He then produced a paper, but without specifying what it contained, rung the bell, and dispatched one of his domestics for an Attorney. The servant soon returned, saying, the Attorney his master usually employed, was not at home, but that Mr. — was. No, no, said the old Gentleman, that fellow shall not dine with me, and then charge me for his company. This, it seems, was a trick of the Gentleman on a former occasion, which Mr. Gansel had not forgotten, and was not willing to forgive.

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He consoled Calcraft, however, by saying, that his own Attorney would return by the evening, and then the business should there be concluded.

The contents of this instrument, which was a contract of marriage, were, that Calcraft promised under the forfeiture of fifty thousand pounds, to marry Miss B. within the term of six or seven years, as he should then have acquired such an independence as would enable him to avow his situation. But Mr. Fox had forbid him, on the penalty of forfeiting his patronage, to enter into a serious engagement with a woman in public life. That as these were the sentiments of the person on whom all his future prospects depended, he deemed himself bound in gratitude to regard them with the greatest deference and exactness: and that though he loved her to distraction, his honour, which was pledged in this manner, he could not violate for any object on earth. In short, this had appeared to him the only expedient in his power by which he could obtain her, and keep his own word.

Miss B. listened with patience, while Mr. Ganiel with great seriousness and visible approbation, repeated Calcraft's apology for his present conduct. But the moment he had done, she reprobated the scheme, and expressed her own dissatisfaction in the most indignant terms. She upbraided him with a temerity and presumption to which she

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had given him the most distant encouragement; assuring at the same time, both Mr. Gansel and Calcraft, that she had taken her final resolution against ever forming another connection with any of the sex.

She then rose under strong emotions, and was leaving the room, when Calcraft in a state little short of insanity, stepped hastily between her and the door, as if he was anxious to detain her. This freedom offended her to such a degree, that losing all regard for that decency and delicacy which are inseparable from what may be termed true female dignity, she struck him a violent blow, and instantly burst into tears. Calcraft was confounded, and knew not what other expedient to employ, and the old Gentleman endeavoured to soothe her into her usual good nature. He prevailed on her to sit down and be composed, and struggled to convince her, that her own happiness and peace of mind were the only objects they had in view. The very unhandsome treatment she had received from Metham, he magnified into an unpardonable outrage, which left her no chance of ever having any felicity in the society of a man, whose violence of temper would every moment put her life in danger. By his passions, he told her an obloquy had been raised against her, which it would not be easy to suppress; that her character was injured, and her veracity every where suspected.

suspected. His jealousy would, in his opinion, and without any provocation, often break out beyond all bounds; and it was hardly to be doubted, but that she might soon be the victim of it.

In this manner did he work on her timidity, till she had already realized, in some measure, in her fearful imagination, all the shocking consequences which he had pictured, as resulting from any further connection with Metham. Calcraft finding Mr. Gansel so strenuous an advocate for him, apologised for his leaving him to plead his cause, and pretending business withdrew. He feared, he said, that he should not soon have the honour of repeating his visit, unless he was given to understand that Miss B. should be his. This, he begged the old Gentleman would do with all his address, as he would fly to execute the deed. He was at the same time peculiarly unhappy on Miss B's account, as he knew not what might be the consequence of her returning to town without a protector. This task, he protested he should be happy to undertake by her permission, though it should be at the hazard of his life. This conflict of passion terminated in a fever, and Mr. Gansel, since the holidays were now over, wrote to his son the Colonel, who had returned to town, desiring he would wait on the Manager to acquaint him that Miss B. was so ill at his house, as

that she could not attend the Theatre for some days. And it happened fortunately for her present situation, that the Manager regretted her absence the less, that most of the nights were appointed for benefits.

Mr. Gansel was not idle during this interval of business, but executed the trust committed to him by Calcraft, with infinite and unceasing assiduity. At length she received a letter from her mother, acquainting her of Metham's indifference; and alledging, his exasperation had proved more from pride than tenderness; and that the conviction of having a rival, hurt him infinitely more than the fervency of his love. And as a proof that the violence of his attachment, had gave way to sentiments of dissatisfaction and contempt, she added, that it was reported he had renewed his intimacy with a demirip of quality, to whom he had formerly been devoted. In short, it was now her opinion, from the reports that went about, that though her daughter were to dispense with the resolution she had formed, it was no longer his intention to realize the frequent promises he had made of marrying her.

This letter gave a sanction to all that Mr. Gansel had said. It was strengthened by Metham's silence, who had not all this time either seen or written to her, though he was supposed to have known where she was. For had she had an interview with him before
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this fatal union took place, to which she had been so much solicited, though she might not have literally complied with his entreaties, she would not, in all probability, have connected herself with another. But every thing concurred to make her the dupe of her own resentment. It was no longer in her power to withstand the arts that were laid to ensnare her. The writing which Calcraft had left, was immediately copied, and a message dispatched to require his attendance for the purpose of signing and sealing it.

Her sentiments on this occasion, though natural, were chiefly in favour of the man of her choice. The only person on earth to whom her heart was engaged; the object of her virgin affection; the father of a child on whom she doted, engrossed her whole mind, and banished from her imagination every other man. Shocked at the idea of forming another union while her passions were in this situation, she once more relapsed, and determined to have nothing further to say to Calcraft or Mr. Gamsel. But the latter no sooner heard of this fluctuation of sentiment, than he immediately renewed the attack which had so well succeeded before. He showed her the extreme absurdity of opposing, in this manner, her good fortune; and that the silliness of retracting her word, would depreciate her very much in the estimation

of all her most valuable friends. He asked her what she had to expect from a man, who was determined to treat her either with the most frantic jealousy, or a fullen contempt. He affected to feel for her heat of spirit; and insinuated, that she could not now break her engagement with Calcraft, but at the expence of her honour, and of that gratitude which she owed to the warm and sincere interest he had at so much inconvenience and risk to himself, taken in her situation and affairs.

These arguments had the desired effect. Miss B. who regarded Metham with strong affection, though she had begun to relent of the usage she had given him, and the vow she had made, could not reconcile her heart to any thing like a slight from him. This operated with the greater energy, that the circumstances which distinguished their connection pressed upon her recollection. Therefore to put an end to all future molestations from a person, who under her present impressions, she was persuaded had used her so ill, she made no further opposition to the proposals now made her.

Calcraft flew on the wings of love to Donalton-Park, where the deed was executed; and except the omission of the ceremony, the mock nuptials were fully solemnized. There was a something within her, which told her that all was not right. O conscience! conscience! happy were it for blind unthinking mortals,

mortals, that more attention were given to thy frequent and kind admonitions than generally is.

This poor unfortunate woman was so little acquainted with the state of her own heart, that like the patriarch's dove, she immediately longed to return to that home where all her happiness had been so long deposited. Had she known the real situation of Metham, she would herself sued for a reconciliation on her knees. On their return to town, the paper was left in the custody of Mr. Gansel, as a place of the greatest security; and in the keeping of one, who had shown himself to be one of her best friends.

C H A P. VIII.

A SUCCESSION OF VEXATIONS AND VICISSITUDES.

NOT suspecting she had been at all deceived in the account which she had got of Metham's state of mind, she wrote to him, informing him what she had done, in order to bar all prospect of any union between them for ever. But this unhappy man, instead of the insensibility which they had imputed to him, had been confined to his bed by means of a violent fever, under which he had laboured ever since their separation. He was only at this time slowly recovering

covering from what had almost killed him. But on the receipt of a letter which contained so cruel an intimation, his disorder returned, and with it his delirium. This shock reduced him to a state of madness which is not to be described. And he was only prevented from destroying himself by his friend Major Burton, and the care of his faithful valet, who never left him.

Calcraft's mode of accomplishing with so much perfidy to his friend, this base design, subjected him to the meanness of bribing the servants. It was by this means, Lady Walter had been rendered accessory to the fatal misconduct of her daughter. Miss B's servant whom she had hired in the place of her faithful Irish woman O'Bryen, but whom she never liked, had been bought over to Calcraft's interest, and imposed upon her mother the situation of Metham, which had such an influence on his conduct. But a union originating in falshood, could not produce that satisfaction which it otherwise would. There is a right and wrong in every thing; and whoever attempts to gratify his passions at the expence of truth or justice, may well lay his account with disappointment or remorse at the long run.

It was but a few days that she had been in town, when Metham's valet wanted to speak to her. He had brought her a letter, which he was ordered to put only into her own
8 hand,

hand. The poor fellow wept bitterly at the sight of her. He gave a mournful account of his master, and told his artless tale with an earnestness which she could hardly bear. He told her that his master was still confined to his bed; that he had groaned and cried till he was perfectly exhausted; that unless she came to see and comfort him, he could not live; that he was constantly raving about her, wishing he could once more call her his; and often conjuring her, on his knees, to be reconciled to him. She could but just say to this honest dependent, that it was now much too late; when he exclaimed with a tone of voice which would have rended a heart of stone, "Then we are all undone, my poor little master and all!"

She perceived in this unaffected, but kind creature's extreme dejection, a picture of the sorrow which she had bequeathed to a family in which she had once been happy. She looked at the man with a mixture of tenderness for his sensibility and horror at the mischief which her temerity had wrought; and rushed from him to hide her agonizing sensations, which at this moment drove her to the brink of madness. And in the language of sensibility, thus abused and betrayed, she upbraided at once, both her mother and Calcraft for the duplicity and treachery of their conduct. The effect of such a conflict shook her whole frame, and she fell

E 6 senseless

senseless on the floor. She was consequently, conveyed to her room, in a state of grief and despondency, little better than the man she had thus irreparably injured.

When Metham's servant returned, the answer which he brought from Miss B. was to a person in his condition almost instant death. The human frame is not in every case equal to such a shock. Metham's madness increased. He wrote to her once more, and renewed all his former protestations, conjuring her by every tender idea which then pressed on his mind, to return again to his arms. But the consequence of this tender and pathetic epistle only increased the despair to which her obstinacy had reduced him. For the perturbation of spirit which Miss B. experienced from these vicissitudes of extreme sensibility, terminated in such a frantic state of mind, as rendered her for some time incapable of attention to any thing. This melancholy stupor so nearly allied to real idiotism, prevented her answering Metham's letter so soon as she would otherwise have done. This circumstance, probably, saved him. It occasioned a temporary suspension of his affliction, by the angry feelings which were the necessary effect of a treatment apparently contemptuous. He felt himself hurt by the omission, and recollected himself so far as to shew a becoming resentment, by sending for his son
from

from Lady Walter, and placing him under the care of Mrs. Dives, his sister. The boy at this time was two years and a quarter old.

Mr. Ross had pitched on Romeo and Juliet for his benefit, in which Miss B. was to sustain the part of Juliet. It was therefore postponed, on account of her illness, which from these agitations was very sensibly increased. Garrick wished him to chuse another, in which her acting was not necessary; and insinuated to her, that she ought not from respect to herself, appear with an inferior performer. It was, however, an invariable maxim with her, that every player in proportion to his or her favour with the public, ought to appear in as many benefits as possible.

At her own benefit this season, she chose the farce of "The Oracle," acted by the Lilliputians. And she had the merit of introducing to the stage the facetious Miss Pope, who has at this day, no rival in her peculiar cast of parts; but whose inimitable powers as an actress, are still inferior to those virtues which adorn and endear her private life.

Miss B. during this severe fit of sickness, had the pleasure of a visit from her worthy friend Quin, who had come to town on this occasion, to complete an act of kindness and generosity to Ryan. The former season he had acted Falstaff for this gentleman's benefit, and was now solicited to repeat the fa-

your. But Quin had now resolved to appear no more, and wrote to Ryan in these terms:
 " I would play for you if I could, but will
 " not whistle for you. I have *willed* you a
 " thousand pounds. If you want money
 " you may have it, and save my executors
 " trouble. JAMES QUIN."

To this gentleman, of whose advice she had so frequently and properly availed herself, Miss B. had recourse in her present perplexed and distressing situation. He never failed to inculcate moderation in the pursuit of pleasure, and satisfaction with the arrangements of Providence. He conjured her to make herself as easy as she could, under that pressure of untoward events which distinguished her fortune. It was a circumstance which he did not forget to urge, the very ardent affection so obvious in the manner of Calcraft. This he thought flattering and agreeable, and he wished her to return it, and shew how much she valued it by her continuing to deserve it. But this was impossible.

The tempers of these lovers were not formed for each other. Miss B. possessed the greatest vivacity. Her sensibility was strong and acute. She had nothing stayed or sedate in her composition. With a most susceptible heart and roving imagination she was giddy, artless, and volatile as the wind.
 Her

Her lover was on the contrary, cool, good-natured, and complaisant. He went for some time by the name of honest Jack Calcraft, which imported little more than that he had not yet discovered abilities sufficient to make him a knave. His appearance was vulgar, but not unmanly. And though not possessed of either genius or literature, he was not without a considerable share of caution and policy. He acquired regularity from the minutiae of the counting-house; and prosecuted even his pleasures and his views, with the habits of a man of business.

Miss B. naturally contrasted in her mind, the two gentlemen with whom she had been thus nearly connected. And Calcraft always suffered in her opinion from the comparison. This filled her heart with indifference, probably with disgust, which would not be lessened by the frequent recollection of such a system of artifice as had thus undone her.

Her conduct to Metham, so justly offended his friends, that they unanimously treated her with contempt and aversion. Mr. Brudenel never once honoured her with a visit, except calling on her twice from motives of generosity to do her some favour. The other companions of this injured gentlemen, were too much men of the world, to give themselves much concern either with the guilty levities of Miss B. or the romantic sorrows of Metham.

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He was prevailed upon, immediately on his recovery, to go abroad; a scheme which he fell into the more readily, as it would afford him an opportunity of revenging the perfidy of his mistress on the whole sex. He was, however, perfectly accomplished in all those external and superficial qualities which are of so much estimation in the fashionable world. His figure was elegant, and his address singularly polite and interesting. He was, therefore, always a favourite with the Ladies. And it was not long before Miss B. had the mortification to hear, that he had dropped his handkerchief at the feet of the *Gosin*, the reigning toast at that time in the court of Versailles.

Calcraft, at the conclusion of the season, hired a pretty box at Twickenham. It was called Ragmon's Castle; and here they spent their summer. She had lost her two most favourite female friends by death, and contracted no new ones, consequently, she saw but few visitants of that description. But though they lived thus in the country, one house did not hold them both when in town.

Her theatrical negociation for this year was proposed by Clutterbuck, an intimate acquaintance of the Managers. He offered her the parts of Juliet, Desdemona, and Calista, which Garrick thought might be an inducement, and which Mrs. Cibber condescended to resign in her favour. For so great
was

was the intimacy between these two theatrical heroines, that Miss B. both in public and private, always gave way to the ascendancy of her friend's genius, and was every where proud doing justice to her acknowledged superiority. Mrs. Cibber, on her part, felt this flattering sentiment of a young Lady so popular as Miss B. was, and lost no opportunity of making a suitable return.

Miss B. was now become so much an object of general curiosity and admiration, that Garrick appeared extremely anxious to retain her; but her *penchant* for Covent-Garden, induced her, in opposition to the advice of all her friends, to close with her old patron and friend Rich. This was particularly ill-judged, as Garrick might have improved her in her profession, and the ailing condition of Mrs. Cibber left her in full possession of the Theatre. But here also her evil genius prevailed, and she relinquished these advantages without any equivalent.

On the return of the season, Calcraft persuaded his new companion to live in the house with him. This accommodation was the more easily managed, that Lord Digby, who had occupied part of the house in Brewer-street, was now gone abroad. But the chief cause of this alteration, was the dread of Metham's return from his tour.

For the first time, Miss B. was then made acquainted with the amount of his income. She

She was surpris'd that it was not more, as it did not then exceed her own. They agreed, however, to live on an hundred guineas a quarter. She now thought it high time, to make some use of the bank-notes which had been sent her in so mysterious a manner. With this thousand pounds, therefore, she first paid all her debts, and then increased her jewels. Thus, without debt, possessed of many elegances, and much plate, and having a much larger assortment of diamonds than ladies in her station have, she became the housewife of Calcraft. So that at the commencement of this union, she was at once clear of the world, and possessed of an income superior to his.

Mr. Fox was at this time Secretary at War. On Calcraft's account, she got acquainted with as many military men as she could. And she succeeded so well, as to have generally seven officers of the first rank at their table.

General Braddock, who was just appointed to go to America, gave her his agency without her asking for it. The General, who had known her from her infancy, supped with them the night before his departure. He shewed her a map of the country to which he was destined. "Dear Pap," said "he, we are sent like sacrifices to the altar." His prediction was fully verified by the event. He left a paper with Miss B. which proved to be his will. Thinking her married

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ried to Calcraft, from the matrimonial aspect which their connection and domestic habits bore, he made him his sole executor; and the compliment of plate which he had from government on his nomination, he left to her.

This season at Covent-Garden, promised much success. The Theatre opened with *Romeo and Juliet*. Rich made it his boast, that he had the *Juliet* now as well as the *Romeo*. One night Miss B. observed to him with pleasure, that the house was prodigiously crouded; when taking a pinch of snuff, and turning short upon his heel, he replied, "Yes, Mistrefs, but it is owing to "the procession."

Mr. Garrick, to check the run of *Romeo and Juliet*, was at the expence of a new bell; which not availing to the purpose for which it was purchased, he brought forward *Venice Preserved*, where he and Cibber excelled beyond a possibility of competition.

Romeo and Juliet, in complaisance to the public opinion, was consequently postponed, and Miss B's sarcasm on this occasion, was perfectly *à-propos*. She advised the Manager to introduce his procession into some other piece, as it had been hitherto so efficacious in producing a full house. Rich satisfied himself by observing, in his usual cool and formal way, that he should suppose the man

in Brewer-Street did not lead the most easy life.

Miss B. says, Dr. Francis, was not the translator of Horace, but attributes that production to a Mr. Duncombe. It was idle to make this assertion, without giving the public the reasons on which she thought proper to contradict the current opinion of the learned world. This Doctor, however, who had formerly produced *Eugenia*, now brought forward a Tragedy called *Constantine*.

In this piece Miss B. was to act the part of the Empress *Fulvia*; and as she provided her own dress at her own expence, she prepared to astonish the public with its richness, elegance, and lustre. The Doctor was known among the literati; the name of *Barry* possessed at that time all its powerful attractions, and the whole strength of the house was called forth to support this exhibition. From these circumstances in its favour, there was not a doubt but the public curiosity would be excited. The court, however, of this celebrated Emperor, was attended only with its own suit. The house was empty, except a few in different parts of it who had received orders. A circumstance perfectly unparalleled in the History of the Theatre.

The mortification of the author on this event, is hardly to be imagined, but Miss B. with great humanity, made up to him and invited him to supper. Here she introduced him

him to Mr. Fox, who at her request, promised to provide for him.

Next morning Miss B. was brought to bed of a daughter, which gave infinite satisfaction to Calcraft; who imagined from this circumstance, that her affections, as well as her person, would for the future continue in his possession. Lady Caroline Fox, Lady Tyrawley, and Mr. Fox, stood sponsors in person, which put the certainty of the marriage of the parents out of all doubt; as she could not have been thus respected by persons in such an elevated rank, in any character less honourable. And it could not otherwise be conceived, on the least attention to the comparative merits of Metham and Calcraft, either in parts or property, that she could have preferred the latter to the former, but because she would rather be married to another, than even live without marriage with the man she loved.

Alarmed by the news of Metham's returning to England, Calcraft urged Miss B. to resign the annuity which that Gentleman had settled on her, as it was not proper a woman who was to be his wife, and whom the world esteemed to be so, should have a settlement from any but himself. She made no hesitation in adopting this proposal; and he promised to settle on her an estate of one hundred and twenty pounds a year at Grant-ham, left him by his grandfather, upon her
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for life, and her daughter Caroline Elizabeth. He also put in her hands his *will*, in which he bequeathed her the interest of eleven thousand pounds in the funds, which he had accumulated while Paymaster and Contractor for the King's troops during the late rebellion.

She immediately delivered the deed which she had from Metham, into the hands of Mr. Moore, her intimate friend, requesting him to return it into the hands of Metham on his arrival in England. This, however, from the troubled state of Mr. Moore's mind, was never done.

Moore, it seems, had fixed his heart on a married Lady in Ireland, who had promised to go with him to the Continent, but she in the mean time saw another whom she preferred. She wrote to him an account of what she had done. He was, when he received this letter, dining with a club of Gentlemen at a tavern in Pall-Mall; and not able to bear the shock, retired into another room, and shot himself through the head. His heir at law took immediate possession of his effects, as he died intestate; and the writings which belonged to Metham remained among Moore's effects, till Miss B's son, by that Gentleman, came of age.

Doctor Francis, in consequence of Miss B's recommendation, attached himself with unceasing assiduity to Mr. Fox, but still more to Calcraft. The Lady of the former being
much

much indisposed, no table was kept there. The Doctor was a *bon vivant*. He preferred a *magnum bonum* to his breviary. He was therefore most to be found, where the table was best served.

Both these Gentlemen, however, continued their attendance on the Secretary at War, whom they often met at Miss B's; and by whose influence with Mr. Fox, they both profited. They also lived to return the obligation in a manner not less disgraceful to themselves, than disgusting to their patron. Miss B. shews her gratitude, by recapitulating the good qualities of Mr. Fox. In her opinion, he was the best of husbands and of fathers. The son of this great man, who by his own transcendant genius, has still become greater was an early object of his father's attentive assiduity. He would never be accessory to the least forfeiture of his word with this darling boy. And this he always recommended to those about him, as well by example as by precept.

He had ordered the wall before Holland-House to be taken down, and new pallisades put in its room, that the building might not be secreted from the view of the road. This could only be done by gunpowder, and he promised Charles that he should be present. This, by some misunderstanding could not be verified, as the wall was blown up without Mr. Fox's knowledge. He ordered it
imme-

immediately to be rebuilt, and when finished, blew it up again, that he might keep faith with the boy.

In Lear's Alexander, which Rich now revived, the parts of the Rival Queens were given to Miss B. and Mrs. Woffington. The animosity which this Lady had long borne. Miss B. was rather increased than diminished. The excessive finery of the latter in the character of the Empress Fulvia, was not to be forgiven. Miss B. had likewise just imported from France, two tragedy dresses of superior finery and elegance. In one of these she appeared in the green-room, as the Persian Princess. Mrs. Woffington could hardly bear the sight, and with all the authority of managerial power, desired that Miss B. would never more, on any account, wear these robes in the piece they were to perform that night.

This peremptory interdiction did not very well suit Miss B's temper of mind, who told her whatever she might do to oblige her, she was not to be dared into any thing contrary to her own inclination. Mrs. Woffington then changing her style, thought proper to retract what she before had so imperiously commanded. And Miss B. with her usual frankness, consented to grant her request.

The next night, however, she put on her other suit, which was still more splendid and charming than the other. Mrs. Woffington regarded this as a fresh insult. Her rage was

so

so much exasperated that she drove her off the carpet with a violence which the audience observed, and gave her the *coup de grace*, almost behind the scenes.

Miss B. with a petulance as unjustifiable as the envy of the other, sported once more the robes which had given the first offence; and to Mrs. Woffington's extreme mortification, appeared next night with them in the green-room. The altercation was immediately renewed with more bitterness and ferocity, between these two rival Heroines than ever. Mrs. Woffington raved, and Miss B. looked at her with a smile of contempt.

It was well for the latter, that Comte Haslang at that moment made his appearance. To him she explained the *fracas*, and acquainted him with what had occasioned the change of her attire. This she did in Mrs. Woffington's hearing, who immediately sent for the Manager, but he was wise enough not to interfere.

The recrimination continued to be tolerably supported on both sides, till Miss B. was obliged to leave the field to her fair conqueror. Nor had she retired, perhaps, without feeling the prowess of her rival, but that his Excellency Comte Haslang kindly covered her retreat.

Foote availed himself of this ridiculous incident, and diverted the town at these Ladies expence, by a *petit piece*, which he en-

titled "The Green-Room Squabble; or, a
" Battle Royal between the Queen of Baby-
" lon, and the Daughter of Darius." The
subject was not ill suited to the invention of
this inimitable wit, and he turned it to a
very lucrative account.

This dreadful rupture, produced such an
inveterate aversion and contempt in the breast
of both Ladies for each other, that they re-
mained for ever after irreconcilable. When
Mrs. Woffington was on her death-bed, she
sent for Miss B. to inform her that she had once
done her an intentional injury, by showing a
letter of Miss B's which had accidentally fallen
into her hands, to Mr. Fox; and which was
written in such a style as to be capable of a
very different interpretation from what the
writer meant. But that Gentleman and Miss
B. not being on the terms suspected, this
experiment of low malignity did not succeed.

The play of Alexander, however, assisted,
perhaps, by the contentions which prevailed
in the green-room, answered the purpose of
the Manager. But this was chiefly attri-
buted to the triumphal entry of the hero
into Babylon, in which Rich exhibited
the utmost exuberance of his genius for
show. It exceeded, in point of taste and
magnificence, every thing of the kind which
had yet appeared on the stage, and amply
repaid the expence it occasioned. Here he
might

might with infinite propriety, have produced his snuff-box, and exclaimed in his usual style of admiration, It is my triumph!

About this time the two Miss Merediths, on account of the younger's health, were obliged to visit the continent. They wished Miss B. to accompany them, but her business would not permit her. She had asked all the officers she knew for their respective agencies, and was obliged to be on the spot, that she might claim their promise the instant they were preferred.

Exclusive of General Braddock's, as already mentioned, since her connection with Calcraft, she had gotten that of Sir John Mordaunt and General Campbell, the late Duke of Argyll. She had also procured the promise of Colonel, since General Honeywood, to the same effect, who was then on the list for an English regiment. Miss B. was not less assiduous in procuring these agencies, than Calcraft in executing them when obtained.

Indeed, by her attention to his, she almost totally neglected her own affairs. Her cook disbursed all the money without any controul. She believed him to be as honest a man, as he was a good cook. They had their table crowded with guests at dinner and supper every day, which increased the expence three times more than the allowance agreed upon.

And it never came into Miss B's imagination, but he would cheerfully defray all those additional charges which were chiefly incurred by entertaining such gentlemen as had thus promoted his interest. Mr. Fox, Lord Kildare, the Marquis of Granby, and General Hervey, were constantly either at breakfast, dinner, or supper, and often enough at all three. Such guests as these were not to be put off with ordinary fare.

Miss B. imagined that Hollwood-Hill, of which Calcraft had made a purchase, was intended for her and her daughter. It is situated near Bromley in Kent. Her father had been once owner of the same place, which made her regard it with the greater partiality. The house was antique, and not by any means equal to its offices and stables. She therefore determined to repair it to her taste. Doctor Francis, who loved good eating and drinking, kept with her, and gave all the assistance in his power.

The garden consisted only of ten acres. General Campbell sent her a garden, and an abundance of shrubs and exoticks, from Combebank. In this spot she built a hot-house, a green-house, and an ice-house. All this was completed in four months. The expedition by which it had been rendered habitable and commodious, procured her the praise of all her visitors; which, to one of her vanity, must have been sufficiently agreeable.

It

It was, however, too near town to be kept by such an hospitable mistress, but at an incredible expence. And Calcraft connected with it a farm, for supplying the family with such things as were wanted in the country. By the end of summer, however, on casting up their accounts, Miss B. found she had expended six hundred pounds.

C H A P. IX.

M O R E I N C I D E N T S.

ON occasion of a splendid masquerade given by the foreign Ambassadors to the Nobility, and other persons of distinction, many of those of her own sex consulted Miss B. as to the fashion of the habits they should appear in; for her taste and fancy in the art of personal decoration were supposed superior to those of the most skilful and ingenious of her contemporaries. To the number of the Ladies of distinction who had patronized our heroine, were now added the Ladies Kildare and Granby. The Lords Kildare and Granby, Mr. Fox, and Mr. Digby complimented Miss B. with a present of a hundred pounds each, in return for their four seats at her benefit; which was also rendered the more lucrative from the circumstance of her interest being warmly promoted by the Ladies, who had solicited

her advice with respect to their appearance at the masquerade. Through these and other means, the emoluments of her benefit this season, amounted to upwards of eleven hundred pounds.

In consequence of Miss B's intercession with Mr. Fox, Doctor Francis obtained a promotion; and her interest among the people in power was esteemed so great, that numbers of military gentlemen were indefatigable in their endeavours to ingratiate her favour, which they looked upon as the surest means of advancing their fortunes. Thus admired and courted, possessed of a large income, and in the constant habit of receiving valuable presents from an extensive and highly respectable circle of acquaintance, still Miss B. was not happy; and the uneasiness of her mind, combined with the fatigue incidental to the exercise of her profession, and the interest she took in the concerns of Mr. Calcraft, had an unfavourable effect upon her health.

By the advice of the faculty, Miss B. determined to spend a few weeks at Bristol, previous to the commencement of the theatrical season; and set out for that place accompanied by Mr. Delany's widow, who had been lately married to a Mr. Walker, one of Mr. Calcraft's clerks. On their road to Bristol, they stopped at the Castle-Inn at Marlborough, and there met Messrs. Quin, Beard,

Beard, and Ryan. On his last visit to the metropolis, Mr. Quin having been detained there by his engagement with his numerous friends, longer than he intended to stay, he resolved not to go to London again, but he had requested a select party to meet him every summer at Marlborough. They had now assembled at the appointed place, and agreed not to separate till they had drank a certain quantity of wine; how much is not remembered, but Miss B. thought it sufficient for regaling the same number of moderate drinkers for a twelvemonth.

Mr. Quin received our heroine is a manner expressive of the most cordial affection and esteem. He ordered Smith, the master of the inn, to dress for supper every article the larder contained, and to add every rarity that the town could afford. Before ten o'clock, a company of six and twenty persons sat down to a table furnished in a manner that might gratify the most luxurious palate. About three in the morning Miss B. quitted these votaries of Bacchus, and pursued her journey.

On her arrival at Bristol, she received a letter, informing her that Mr. Calcraft was afflicted with the gout in his head; that her daughter was seized with the small-pox, and that, from symptoms, there was reason to apprehend the distemper had communicated from the child to Miss B's mother.

Immediately upon receiving this intelligence, in all the anxiety of impatience she set out on her return to London with an additional pair of horses to the chaise. Arriving at the castle at Marlborough about two in the afternoon, she found that Mr. Quin was still in bed; and insisting that he should not rise, she sat by his bed-side, and conversed with him till she was informed her carriage was ready.

Miss B. had intimated to Mrs. Walker, to whom she unreservedly communicated all the transactions of her life, that a nobleman of a large fortune and a generous disposition had professed himself her admirer. On their return to London, the attention of Mrs. Walker was engrossed by the consideration, that in case of the death of Mr. Calcraft, by forming a connection with the nobleman above alluded to Miss B. would have a more unlimited command of money, of which she hoped to partake.

Upon her arrival in London, Miss B. had the satisfaction to find her mother perfectly recovered, that her daughter was not in so dangerous a state as was at first apprehended, and that Mr. Calcraft's complaint in his head was but the natural consequence of a tavern debauch.

Mr. Calcraft, who was inexpressibly fond of his daughter, was filled with anxiety, lest the cruel disease with which she was attacked
should

should disfigure her features : but the loss of beauty was no cause of alarm and apprehension to the mother, who was fully sensible, that those occurrences which most contributed to the interruption of her happiness would never have existed, if she had been less distinguishable on the score of personal attraction.

The next season Miss B's income from the theatre was augmented, in consequence of Miss Nossiter being engaged through the recommendation of Mr. Barry. In her articles with the managers of the theatre, it was stipulated, that Miss B. should have a higher salary than any other female performer ; and as the managers acceded to Mr. Barry's demand of five hundred pounds for his pupil, they raised Miss B's stipend to as many guineas for the season.

Though Mrs. Cibber had attained an advanced period of life, she still continued to personate the youthful Juliet, in which character Miss Nossiter made her first appearance ; and on this occasion, Mrs. Cibber placed herself in the front row of the balcony. To introduce his pupil, Barry delivered a prologue written for the purpose, and when he came to the line containing the words, " and just her age," he directed his eye to Mrs. Cibber, and uttered them in so marked and pointed a manner, that the audience

dience immediately bore testimony to the justness of the satire which the actor contrived to convey, without violating the sense of his author; and this stroke had the favourable effect also of prejudicing them in favour of the young adventurer, on whom they bestowed a profusion of applause, partly in avowal of her talents for stage-exhibition, and partly from a generous wish to prevent her from being abashed and disconcerted by the appearance of a performer, in so conspicuous a part of the theatre, who had obtained so distinguished a share of reputation by her admirable representation of the same character.

Miss B. now interested herself most zealously in behalf of her brother, Lieutenant O'Hara, whose promotion in the service had been obstructed by an act of levity which we shall here recount. While Lord Tyrawley was Governor of Gibraltar, the ship to which Lieutenant O'Hara belonged was stationed off that fortress, and availing himself of every opportunity of being on shore, he experienced every mark of respect and attention that he could reasonably hope for on account of his near degree of relationship to the commander. In the many engagements his Lordship had sustained, he had received a great number of wounds, whereby a lameness was produced. An entertainment being given to the ladies and gentlemen of the place,

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place, as the Governor was walking up the ball-room, his son, forgetful of the respect that was due to an imperfection produced by so honourable a cause, walked close behind him, at the same time imitating his limping gait in a manner that excited laughter from a part of the company. This indecent ridicule, the effect of a natural gaiety of temper and inconsiderate mirth, directed, however, to a very improper object, being either accidentally observed by, or officiously communicated to, the brave veteran, who gloried in the wounds he had received, in bravely fighting for his King and country, highly incensed him against his son.

Soon after the above occurrence, sailing orders being issued, while the Captain was confined on shore by illness, the command of the vessel devolved upon Lieutenant O'Hara; and proceeding on a cruize, in a short time he met with and engaged an enemy's ship of greatly superior force, and after an obstinate battle, in which he dismasted his adversary, he exerted great professional knowledge and skill in bringing off his own ship. This atchievement acquired the Lieutenant a high and very deserved share of reputation; and as his Captain's illness had terminated in death, he placed a firm reliance on being appointed to the command of a vessel which he had saved by his bravery and skill. However, he was disappointed; for Lord Tyraw-

ley, unable to forgive the affront offered him in the ball-room at Gibraltar, exerted his influence with the Admiral, to defeat the intended promotion of his son. Exasperated by the rigour of his father, and the easy acquiescence of the Admiral in this unjust interference, Lieutenant O'Hara inclosed his commission in a letter to the Lords of the Admiralty, containing some expressions of rudeness; and for this indignity, it was expected he would be tried by a Court-Martial; but their Lordships, at length, ascribing his disrespect towards them, to the unkindness of his father and the Admiral, contented themselves with passing a resolution, deeming him incapable of future service.

The Hon. Mr. Yorke, brother to Lady Anson, was a great admirer of Miss B's theatrical talents; and to procure her brother's reinstatement, she applied to that gentleman, who introduced her to Lady Anson, and by her intercession Lieutenant O'Hara was restored to the service.

Miss B. having been introduced to Lady Anson by Mr. Yorke, her ladyship desired to see her often, and the invitation was gladly accepted. Her ladyship had a natural turn for literature; and her indifferent state of health obliging her to remain much at home, she made considerable progress in most of the sciences. Inspired by the example of Lady Anson, Miss B.

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now determined to employ all the time she could spare from the avocations of the Theatre, in the study of Philosophy; and in pursuance of this design, she became a constant frequenter at the Lectures delivered by the late Mr. Benjamin Martin, at his house in Fleet-street; she several times visited the Observatory at Flamsteed-house, and by reading and conversation, made some progress in Astronomy; and was proceeding through the several gradations of natural Philosophy, when her avidity in this study was checked, by the horror she conceived at beholding the effect of an air-pump upon a cat.

Quitting her philosophical pursuits, she now turned her attention to politics, and read Grotius, Puffendorf, and other celebrated Writers on the Law of Nations. In this science she, in a short time, attained to some proficiency, her progress being facilitated by her frequent conversations on political topics with Lady Rochford, who was one of the most accomplished women of her time; and was so conversant in state affairs as to render her Lord very essential services in his ambassadorial Negotiations at several of the principal Courts of Europe.

Miss B. had the more leisure to pursue her studies, as her appearance on the stage was not very frequent, on account of Mr. Barry having revived several old plays,

for the purpose of giving Miss Nossiter an opportunity of displaying her talents to advantage in the principal characters. This winter added to the number of our heroine's patronesses, the amiable daughter of Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, who had lately espoused the Earl of Essex.

C H A P. X.

FRESH BICKERINGS WITH CALCRAFT.

THE polite circles had admitted Miss B. to be the supreme dictatress in the article of dress, and her judgment in points of fashion still remained decisive. But, so far from being intoxicated with the tribute of universal applause and admiration, she accepted the offering with an indifference truly philosophical; and derived a truly rational pleasure from finding her company not only acceptable to, but even anxiously solicited by Lord Lyttelton, George Bubb Doddington, Esq; Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, Mr. Foote; and, in short, by many other of the most distinguished wits of the age. At the same time, the circumstance that might still have proved more flattering to her pride, was that of being admitted to an intimacy with a number of ladies more celebrated

celebrated for the excellency of their moral character than their exalted station in life.

Mr. Calcraft daily experienced an increase of his business as an agent, and Miss B. was indefatigable in her endeavours to promote his emoluments. After she had for some time kept her bed through illness, she was informed, at a late hour at night, of an intended promotion, upon which she instantly arose, dressed, and went to a masquerade in the Haymarket, in search of General Honeywood and Colonel Lascelles, for the purpose of recalling to their memory, a promise they had made in favour of Mr. Calcraft; and her application to these gentlemen was attended with the desired success: but the fatigue she underwent on this occasion, so afflicted her weak state of health, that she was confined to her bed for a fortnight.

Mr. Calcraft's agencies continuing to increase, an additional number of clerks and domestics were employed, and it was determined to remove to a more spacious house: but having already incurred debts on that account, to the amount of twelve hundred pounds, Miss B. declined acting any longer in the ostensible capacity of housekeeper; and therefore, relinquishing her design of going to Bristol, she resolved upon a journey to the Continent. To this excursion she had two other inducements; the first,
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to visit her friend Miss Meredith, who was so ill as to be deemed irrecoverable; and the second, personally to acknowledge the civilities she had received from Madame Brilliant.

Imagining that his assiduities had not only subdued Miss B's insensibility, but also inspired her with an attachment to his person, Mr. Calcraft affected an indifference towards her; nor did he scruple to avow a passion for another woman. This object of his desire, was a celebrated courtesan named Lucy Cooper; and that he might pursue the amour with the less interruption, he encouraged Miss B. in her design of going to France.

Upon her arrival at Boulogne, she visited the convent of the Ursulines, and was most cordially received by the ladies of that monastery, with whom she had kept up a regular correspondence for several years. Having remained with this sisterhood four days, she repaired to Paris, and learning that the celebrated theatrical performers Madame Clairon and Monsieur Lequin were under confinement, for having refused to appear upon the stage on some particular occasion, she naturally congratulated herself on being a native of Britain, where the peasant and the lord are equally protected by the law, in giving as great a scope and latitude to the

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dictates of an independent mind as can be consistent with the welfare of civil society.

While she was at Paris, she received an invitation to Voltaire's elegant retirement, where the Marquis de Vernieul was then on a visit: but the time she had prescribed for her stay on the Continent, obliged her to decline an opportunity that she had long anxiously wished for of conversing with the man whose writings had acquired him the splendid reputation of being distinguished as the *Shakespear of France*.

Arriving at Thoulouse, she received the afflicting news of the death of the eldest of the Miss Merediths, who, on her departure from England, appeared to be in perfect health; and that the younger sister, whose life had been long despaired of, was in a favourable way of recovery. In a fortnight after her sister's death, she was, contrary to all expectation, able to accompany Miss B. to Paris; where the gaiety of the place in a great measure relieved her mind from the burthen of anxiety with which it was oppressed by the loss of her sister, and contributed, in a short time, to the perfect re-establishment of her health. The three weeks of her stay at Paris were engaged in excursions to the environs of the city, in visiting the public spectacles, partaking of *petit soupers*, and other amusements to which she received perpetual invitations, the Marquis

quis de Vernieul, who had returned from Voltaire's seat, seldom failing to be one of the company.

Returning to England, Miss B. found that Mr. Calcraft had taken a commodious house in Parliament-street, and had retained as *maitre d'hotel* Mr. Quince, who had lived in the same capacity with Mr. Pelham till the death of that gentleman. Including fourteen or fifteen clerks, the family consisted of upwards of thirty persons; and exclusive of the produce of the farm, Mr. Calcraft assigned two thousand five hundred pounds a year for the expences of the table. This liberal arrangement induced Miss B. to imagine that Mr. Calcraft would no longer scruple to discharge the debt she had incurred of twelve hundred pounds; and therefore she was the less uneasy on account of having increased her pecuniary embarrassments, by borrowing six hundred pounds of Miss Meredith, to defray the expences of her excursion to France.

Mr. Rich having refused to allow Miss Nossiter the salary demanded for her by Mr. Barry, that Gentleman quitted the Theatre in disgust, and went to Ireland, and Mr. Sheridan was engaged to perform a certain number of characters. The company was also reinforced by Mr. Sparks, an actor of considerable merit.

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Soon after the commencement of the theatrical season, a rehearsal of the Distressed Mother was appointed. Miss B. was remarkably punctual in her attendance; but coming to the house rather later than her usual hour, she was surprised at finding Mrs. Woffington reciting the part of Andromache. Upon her expressing displeasure at this circumstance, Mrs. Woffington said she intended to represent the Queen; and she conceived Hermione would be the more proper part for Miss B. as corresponding with her youth and elegance of figure, and at the same time affording her an opportunity of displaying the ornaments she had brought from Paris. Upon this, Miss B. without giving any reply to her insulting rival, informed Mr. Rich of what had passed; and he immediately compelled Mrs. Woffington to a reluctant surrender of the Queen.

Having received the produce of her benefit, Miss B. intended to discharge her debts; and preparatory thereto, she gave Mr. Calcraft an account of the several sums that were unpaid at the time of their removal from Brewer-street. Having deliberately looked over the several bills, he said the state of his affairs would not permit him to discharge them; adding, that her salary, and the sum assigned by him for that purpose, were sufficient, with tolerable management,
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to maintain the family. He now enquired, in what manner she had disposed of the thousand that she received at the time of her disunion with Mr. Metham, at the same time avowing himself to be the donor of the bank-note to that amount, as well as the fifty pounds to pay for her Tunbridge horses. This direct refusal to discharge her debts, greatly exasperated and surprised Miss B. who had flattered herself that he would not hesitate to pay them, as well as the six hundred pounds borrowed of Miss Meredith, on occasion of the expedition to France.

Having somewhat recovered from her chagrin, she rose in order to quit the room, but was restrained by Mr. Calcraft, who was apprehensive of her leaving the house, which was indeed her intention. He then told her, if she would give him a proof that she was sensible of the value of money, he would, for every hundred she had demanded, give her a thousand pounds. Then taking out his pocket-book, he laid on the table in bank-notes and cash, upwards of three hundred pounds, which, including the thousand and fifty received before, made the amount of the bills due. Amidst the displeasure she had conceived against Mr. Calcraft on account of his backwardness to supply her with money, she received some consolation from learning that it was to him she was indebted for the thousand pounds, and not the noble-

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man to whose generosity she had ascribed it; and who had, from the period of her separation from Mr. Metham, passionately solicited her favour.

Soon after the conversation, the particulars of which are above recited, Miss B. was informed, a Lady, who had several times called, but declined leaving her name, or any message, wished to see her. The stranger being admitted, she exhibited marks of the most deplorable distress and misery to which humanity can be reduced. She was a tall, thin, pale woman, with a countenance expressive of the deepest sorrow and depression of spirits; but an air of dignity shone through all her wretchedness. Being desired to be seated, and explain the purport of her visit, this unfortunate woman related the following affecting narrative: she was the widow of Sir John Lindsay, who had been blown up in a man of war, of which he was first lieutenant; her eldest son, Sir John, had been taken home by his uncle, a merchant of eminence; her eldest daughter, while she lay in, had fallen out of a window, and broke one of her legs, which had been amputated, and she was otherwise a cripple, in consequence of the accident; the distress, anxiety, and agitation of mind produced by the unhappy fate of her husband, having thrown her into a premature labour, she was delivered of a son, then four years, who, there was every reason

reason to fear, would be afflicted with idiotism; that her misfortunes had deprived her of the use of her limbs, from which misfortune, however, she was in a great measure restored, having recovered the use of all but her hands; that her whole income consisting of her pension of fifteen pounds a year, to procure the means of subsistence for herself she had been obliged to part with her apparel; and that the cloak and hat, being the only decent part of her dress, were borrowed. She said in conclusion, that she had no pretension to the countenance of Miss B. but urged by her distresses, and encouraged by that Lady's character for benevolence, she had taken the liberty of troubling her with a narrative of her misfortunes.

The cash Mr. Calcraft had left, was still lying on the table; and upon the conclusion of Lady Lindsay's story, Miss B. took up the few guineas, and presented them to her unhappy visitor. Overwhelmed with gratitude, she was for some minutes incapable of uttering a word, but the feelings of her heart were plainly depicted in her countenance. Having in some measure recovered from her embarrassment, Lady Lindsay said, "I meant not, Madam, to intrude upon your generosity, but —." Here she was interrupted by the appearance of Mr. Fox, who observing that Miss B. was discomposed, was about to retire; but taking him

him by the hand she exclaimed, "O, my dear Sir, you are the very person I wished to see." This was the first time she had ever took hold of Mr. Fox by the hand; from the exquisite sentiments she felt under the pressure of so many passions, she pressed it more than she would otherwise have done. She then told him the whole of what she had just heard. She had still kept hold of his hand, nor desired him to sit down. The earnestness of her inclination to relieve this unfortunate Lady, rendered her careless of decorum to the man whom she wished to become her benefactor.

Her plea, however, succeeded. Mr. Fox presented Lady Lindsay with a bank-note of fifty pounds. This generosity overpowered her so much, that she could not speak a word, but the expressions of her grateful sensibility were not the less affecting. And she found herself at last, under the necessity of departing without opening her mouth.

Within a very short space of time Miss B. had the satisfaction of having this worthy person relieved effectually. All her four children were instantly put on the compassionate list, and had ten pounds each allowed them as an yearly appointment. His Majesty was also pleased to grant her for life, an annuity of fifty pounds, in consideration of her late husband's losing his life in defence of his king and country.

When Lady Lindsay was apprized of this pleasing intelligence, she acquainted her tender-hearted benefactress, that her eldest daughter, who had become a cripple, was released from all her misfortunes by death; and that the boy whom she had represented as an idiot, had become all at once, peculiarly sprightly and intelligent.

From all this, Miss B. found herself the happiest of mortals; so true in all cases, is the sacred adage: "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

C H A P. XI.

NEW DISCOVERIES AND NEW MISFORTUNES.

MR. Fox, who had seen a paper lying on Miss B's dressing-table, in a hand which he knew, was exceedingly eager to know the author. Some company being present, he desired to speak with her by herself, and to urge this particular. Calcraft seeing the Secretary and Miss B. alone, concluded that she was now acquainting him with the connection which subsisted between them. And this, of all other things, was what he most dreaded. But after dinner, when the ladies withdrew, the gentlemen rallying Mr. Fox on his *tête-à-tête*, he told them the whole, in confidence, as they were all friends. His enquires, he told them, equally

equally concerned them all. A parody in a newspaper, replete with sarcasm, spirit, and politics, was written by one whom he imagined she knew, and he had been urging her to give up the author. He mentioned the paper which he had seen, as the ground of his suspicion. Calcraft sent immediately for the paper, but not certain what the consequence might be to the author, she peremptorily refused to part with it. This hurt his pride, as he was ambitious to shew how much he was master of his own house. He did not, however, give over his solicitations. Dr. Francis, who next went to Miss B. on the same errand, met with the same denial. Nor did she show the paper till certain her friend who wrote it should not suffer from her complaisance to her guests. How it affected him she knew not, but Calcraft's anxiety was visible and striking. Dr. Francis imputed it to jealousy, while others thought something more at bottom.

Their success at Covent-Garden this year, was not greater than the former; Miss Nossiter returning from Ireland, where she had met with much disapprobation from her connection with Barry, engaged herself with Rich. The two first male characters were Smith and Ross, neither of whom were capital. Miss Nossiter was more agreeable in private than public. Her unfortunate attachment preyed on her spirits incessantly. Miss

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Meredith,

Meredith, who was then Miss B's chief companion, owned herself much charmed with Miss Nossiter, whose flights, whenever she could forget the abortive passion which absorbed her mind, were eminently pleasing.

The Manager now revived the Prophets of Beaumont and Fletcher, because he could easily fill it with as much machinery and pantomimical apparatus as he pleased. And among other things, he presented the public with a spectacle of dancing chairs.

Miss B. was not included in this piece. She had enough of business at home. Calcraft was not himself able to copy all the private letters. She was, therefore, occupied as his assistant; for which, from the swiftness of her managing the pen, she was not ill qualified.

This new employment gave her frequent opportunities of being alone with Mr. Fox, who one day brought on a *tête-à-tête*, which terminated in a complete discovery of the whole of Miss B's connection with Calcraft. Mr. Fox and his Lady had always concluded that they were certainly married; but on being told by Miss B. of all that had passed at the Gansels, and elsewhere, relative to that business; and that Calcraft had always mentioned his patron Mr. Fox, as the only obstacle to that event, he seemed thunder-struck. But she being then pregnant, he advised her to patience and secrecy under the present

present circumstances; assuring her at the same time, of his stedfast friendship; and that as he had been made an actor in this matter without his knowledge, he would one day take a part.

This discovery of Calcraft's villainous duplicity, did not much serve to increase Miss B's affection for a man whom she had regarded before with indifference. But they had few opportunities of entering on serious conversation; and matters did not yet appear sufficiently matured for entering on an eclaireissement, which she foresaw must have ended in a rupture.

The marriage-act, which about this time was brought into the House, was seriously opposed by Mr. Fox; who predicted with his usual foresight, the infinite mischiefs which have since proceeded from that infamous and arbitrary measure. He was so popular from this part of his conduct, that his chariot was actually carried on the shoulders of the mob for several days, all the way from Westminster-Hall to his house in Conduit-street.

For a breach of this law in marrying Vernon the singer, to Miss Portier, the dancer, poor Grierson, curate to Mr. Wilkinson, surrogate of the Savoy, was committed to Newgate, and being found guilty, was sentenced for transportation. This clergyman's situation in prison, was extremely shocking; Miss

B. did all she could for his relief; Mr. Akerman, with his accustomed humanity, at her intercession, removed the unfortunate Gentleman to his own house and table, where he continued till the time of his going abroad arrived. She also, in concert with her numerous fashionable acquaintance, collected a large purse for him; and Mr. Fox secured him, by authentic credentials, of a living, the moment he set footing in America. But heaven had ordained it otherwise. His misfortunes co-operating with the inconvenience of his voyage, brought on an illness which proved fatal to him, long before the ship in which he embarked, reached the place of her destination.

Mr. Ross in the Prophet, being to act the Emperor, consulted Miss B. on the dress in which he should appear. Rich had recommended a full-bottomed wig: Miss B. putting on a grave countenance, advised him to have it as voluminous as possible, and that he should wear a hoop under his lamberkins. Ross thought her serious, and literally adopted her prescription.

When the play was acted, the Emperor thus grotesquely attired to be sure, made his appearance. The house was convulsed with laughter. The joke, however, was attended with this one good effect, it put an end to the ridiculous custom of dressing the heroes and

warriors of antiquity in full-bottomed perukes.

Her benefit this year, was remarkably brilliant and lucrative. But Alzira had too little business for the taste of the English, who are never pleased but when deeply interested. The run of pieces brought forward this year, were but little in her line of acting. So that she appeared but seldom, and was not ill satisfied when the season concluded.

Miss B. had some time before, made Lord Granby a present of a very fine horse. Lord Tyrawley had sent it to her from Gibraltar. And as it was one of the best and swiftest that could be procured, she was happy in being able to make such a present to such a man. And yet the friends and descendants of this illustrious nobleman, could suffer such a person with whom he had been thus intimate, to starve.

Calcraft seems now to have wished he could fairly get quit of his mistress; and pretending that he loved to see her well mounted, bespoke his friend Captain S— to look out for a proper horse on which she might appear. He mentioned a mare of his own, which had no other fault but too much spirit. Calcraft spurned at that impediment, and betted to a pretty large amount that Miss B. would not only ride, but manage the mare completely. It was not, however, without the greatest reluctance, that Miss B. was per-

suaded to attempt so bold a task. Her timidity was but too well justified by the event. The beast taking fright, ran off with her fair rider, who threw herself off so near the edge of a pit that she actually fell into it, and was supposed by all who saw the disaster, to have been dashed to pieces. Her shoulder was dislocated, both the bones of her left arm broken, and the hand hanging to it as if it had been a separate member. And notwithstanding her receiving the best assistance which could at that time be procured, she never had the power of turning her hand since that time.

It was during her confinement by this melancholy accident, that she was acquainted with the death of General Braddock. She received the first intelligence of his fatal disaster from Calcraft, and it rendered her perfectly inconsolable. She was soon after seized with a fever, and even lay for some time in a dangerous situation, from the pressure of this complicated misfortune.

She had but just recovered a little from her illness, when Calcraft desired her to read the following advertisement in one of the daily papers. That a short time before, Thomas Sykes, Esq; died in the South of France, and had left his fortune in the English funds, and his property at the Hague, both of which was supposed to be something considerable,

considerable, to Miss B. belonging to one of the theatres. Further particulars to be had of Mr. Lloyd, in the Temple.

Calcraft calling on this gentleman, was referred to Miss B's cousin Mr. Crawford, of whom honest mention has already been made. From this gentleman Calcraft learned, that old Sykes, before he left England, had enquired much after Miss B. that he had gone abroad in quest of her; and that the servant who had attended him, was soon expected to return with the will, as his master had ordered his remains to be deposited in the church of St. Margaret, Westminster. He was likewise informed, that Miss B. would realize, at least, fifty thousand pounds by this disposition, and that the bulk of the money was then in the funds.

These particulars were found, on enquiry, to be true; but the servant who had the will in his possession, brought neither the will nor the body to England; and likewise secured for himself a retreat, which has never since been discovered. Some years after, she heard in Holland, that the property there, in consequence of not being claimed within a limited time, fell to the States. The money deposited in the English funds, for a similar reason, is also there still. And thus her expectations of a great fortune, like so many of her former delusions, in one moment

vanished; and only left her to deplore a destination, which it was not in her power to redress.

C H A P. XII.

B E N E V O L E N C E.

THE first character that Miss B. appeared in, after the accident of breaking her arm, was Rutland, in the tragedy of the Earl of Essex. In the scene where the poet has represented the Lady under a frantic state of mind, according to the usual manner of stage exhibition, she threw herself on the floor; but to prevent her fractured limb from hurt, she fell on her right side. Mrs. Clive, who was in one of the boxes, knowing it had been her constant practice to fall on her left side in the character of Rutland, exclaimed, "O! she has broke her other arm;" upon which the audience vehemently called for the curtain to be dropped: but upon her rising, they were convinced she was not hurt; and she concluded the scene with louder bursts of applause than she had been honoured with on any former occasion, in consequence of the affectionate impromptu springing from the benevolent heart of Mrs. Clive, who really imagined the accident had occurred which the quickness of her feeling had occasioned her to announce to the audience.

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An endeavour was now made, to perform such pieces as would give Miss B. and Miss Nossiter an opportunity of appearing to advantage on the same nights; and some progress was made in the arrangement, when Miss Nossiter fell a sacrifice to her unfortunate attachment to Mr. Barry. Learning that he had parted from his wife, and engaged in a connection with Mrs. Dancer, the cruel infidelity of her lover had such an effect upon her tender heart that she sickened, and in a short time died; bequeathing all her property, which was not inconsiderable, to the man in whose favour she was so fatally prepossessed.

Lord Tyrawley being returned from Gibraltar, he was soon after summoned to appear at the bar of the House of Commons, to answer to a complaint of a profuse expenditure of the public money, for the repairs and improvements of the fortress, during his government. He was honourably acquitted; upon which he produced a letter, desiring it might be handed to the speaker: this letter being read to the House, was found to be written by the King, who graciously condescended to thank his Lordship for the propriety of his conduct in securing a place of such great national importance.

Some time after the above transaction, Lord Tyrawley was nominated to preside at a Court-Martial for the trial of the very Peer

at whose suggestion his Lordship had been called to the bar of the House of Commons: but he declined this honour, declaring that he would scorn to vote contrary to the dictates of his conscience in favour of his dearest friend; but adding, that if he should find himself compelled to join in condemnation of the accused party, the undiscerning and illiberal part of mankind might attribute to him the design of retaliating upon a person, at whose instigation he had been under the necessity of repelling an unjust accusation.

Lord Tyrawley's arrival in England much embarrassed Mrs. B. for as he had declined visiting her while she cohabited with Metham, she had no expectation that he would shew her any countenance, while she was upon similar terms with a man who was in every respect his inferior. At the time of hearing of the decease of Mr. Sykes, in consequence of which it was expected Mrs. B. would succeed to a large fortune, Mr. Calcraft several times spoke seriously on the subject of marrying her; and most of their acquaintance believing them to be legally united, she resolved to leave Lord Tyrawley under the same deception. Believing her to be married, his Lordship treated Miss B. with great kindness, and made *her* agent to his regiment; which being the Coldstream, was productive of great profit. Mr. Calcraft undertook to transact the business relating to the

the regiment, and promised Mrs. B. all the emoluments that should accrue; but she received not a single guinea on that account.

In the circle of our heroine's female acquaintance, Lady Tyrawley was the only one who knew her real situation; and yet her Ladyship honoured her with as sincere and tender an affection, as she could have manifested had she been her own daughter. By this Lady she was introduced to an intimacy with the Dowager Lady Dillon, Lady Powercourt, and other female characters of distinction, making no scruple to intimate to them that she was really married, as her Ladyship considered the contract she had received from Mr. Calcraft, in the light of an actual and irreversibile engagement for a legal union.

In point of figure Lord Digby was one of the finest of his time, and he had one of the best hearts that ever adorned humanity. It had been long observed that at Christmas and Easter this nobleman's aspect was more than usually grave, and that at those seasons it was his constant custom to wear an old blue coat. Mr. Fox expressing a wish for discovering his nephew's motive, for dressing at particular times in a manner so little corresponding with his general custom, Major Vaughan and another gentleman undertook to watch his Lordship's motions; and they accordingly followed him to the

Marſnalsea Priſon, where they were informed by the turnkey that he never failed to come there twice a year at least, and pay the debts of a number of the prisoners, to whom he at the same time gave money for the support of themselves and families till they could procure employment. The intelligence these gentlemen had procured afforded Mr. Fox infinite satisfaction: but he desired the discovery might be kept secret, lest the manner in which it was obtained might displease his nephew.

However, unable to repress her curiosity on a subject that had afforded her so much satisfaction, the next time she saw his Lordship, in his almsgiving coat, she enquired the reason of his wearing that singular dress? He replied, that she should be satisfied if she would accompany him in his next visit to the place to which his apparel was adapted. The next morning they repaired together to the prison; but the nobleman objected to his companion going within the gate, lest so noisome a place should prove offensive to her; and he ordered the coachman to drive to the George Inn in the Borough, where a dinner was ordered for near thirty persons rescued from a loathsome confinement, restored to their families, and possessing the means of immediate support, through the bounty
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of this truly excellent man, on whom they poured forth the most fervent benedictions.

A few months afterwards Lord Digby went to visit his Irish estates. While in Ireland, his Lordship was indisposed with a violent cold; and being urged by the hospitality which in that country is carried to excess, he drank more liberally than he was accustomed to do: unused to such indulgences, the debauch increased his Lordship's complaint; a fever, attended with a putrid sore throat ensued, and deprived the world of this truly excellent young man, who was infinitely more exalted by the virtues of his heart, than by his distinguished rank in life. Lord Digby's mother and Mr. Fox were twins.

Few men were more happy in the esteem of his friends than Major Vaughan, who being illegitimate, inherited no part of his father's fortune, in consequence of the old gentleman dying suddenly and without a will. The Major had regularly a benefaction of fifty pounds, which he ascribed to the generosity of Earl Fitzwilliam, with whom he had been educated and brought up, and who held him in the highest esteem: but upon the decease of Lord Digby, it appeared the Major's allowance of two hundred pounds a year issued from the purse of that benevolent nobleman.

C H A P. XII.

CLERICAL INGRATITUDE.

MR. Calcraft was now agent to ninety regiments, and six independent companies; he had contracts for the coals and clothing for the colonies, and was appointed Pay-master to the Board of Works, and Deputy Commissary of the Musters.

Miss B. had this year a large receipt on her benefit night; and the season proved more lucrative to the manager than was reasonably to be expected from the weak state of the company, compared with that of the other house; which was then supported by the combined powers of Garrick, Mossop, Woodward, Cibber, Pritchard, and Clive.

Upon the conclusion of the theatrical campaign, the creditors of Miss B. became exceedingly urgent for the discharge of their respective demands. The sums borrowed at different times of Miss Meredith amounted to twelve hundred pounds; and for an increase of her jewels she was indebted in about the same sum to Deard, Massineuve, and Lazarus. Thus circumstanced, she resolved upon coming to an explanation on the subject with Mr. Calcraft; but delayed it from time to time, on account of the house being incessantly crowded with company; and

and to supply present exigencies, she borrowed some hundred pounds of Mr. Sparks.

In the course of the summer, Lord Tyrawley wrote to his Lady, desiring that she would concur with him in selling the Blessington estate, which was to devolve to her upon the death of her brother, who was in a deep decline. On the subject of this letter her Ladyship consulted Miss B. whose advice was that she should give an absolute and direct refusal to the proposition; her acquiescence in which would, in case she should survive his Lordship, leave her without any other provision than her pension as a General's widow. Miss B. was the more induced to recommend this refusal, from the circumstance of her Ladyship having repeatedly intimated a design of bequeathing to her and her children whatever property she might die possessed of. In pursuance of her advice the proposal was rejected.

Miss B. now visited some female friends at Malmsbury; and from thence repaired to Bristol, where she had been but a short time, when an express was sent, requesting her presence at Windsor, on occasion of a contested election for that place. His Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland was a constant employer of the poor, and a liberal benefactor of the town; but many of the voters opposed the re-election of Mr. Fox, who was the Duke's avowed friend, and supported,
though

though ineffectually, the interest of a gentleman who was little known there. Miss B. having an intimacy in several very respectable families at Windsor, she hastened there, in order to exert her influence in favour of Mr. Fox.

On her arrival at Windsor, she requested Sir Francis Delaval to find Mr. Nuthall, a gentleman of the law. Waiting the return of Sir Francis at the gate of an inn, with Mr. Fox's eldest son, afterwards Lord Holland, by her side, a fellow exclaiming, "No Foxes! No Doxies!" aimed a blow at the young gentleman with a large bludgeon, but luckily it did not take effect through the interference of a person standing near, who levelled the ruffian to the ground. At this instant Sir Francis returned with Mr. Nuthall, and the man was taken into custody: but in consideration of the severe blow he had received, and his promising better behaviour, he was dismissed.

The fellow's brutal attack had such an effect upon the mind of Master Fox, as to produce the disorder called *St. Vitus's Dance*; a complaint to which, from any little vexation, he remained subject for several years.

On Miss B's return to Hollwood from Windsor, she went across the country in hopes of finding some agreeable company, rather than by London, which she wished to avoid. Her friend Dr. Francis was the only individual

individual there; and as she had long promised a visit to the celebrated Foote, who then occupied one of Sir John Vanburgh's houses upon Black-heath, she prevailed on the Doctor to accompany her.

They found with this genuine son of humour, the two authors Murphy and Cleland. It was proposed before dinner to go to the sale of the Duchess of Bolton's furniture, which was in the neighbourhood. This famous Lady was lately dead. It is well known she owed her exalted rank in life, to her incomparable merit in playing Polly Peachum in the Beggar's Opera. This circumstance naturally excited the curiosity of Miss B. to see the residence of a person who had thus distinguished herself.

Having mounted her horse, and waited some time at the door for this purpose, Murphy came forth and apprised her, that Dr. Francis thought it was altogether unbecoming his cloth to be seen in public with an actress. This gave her but little concern. And she was satisfied with imputing it to a difference she had with him, on Mason's Elegy to Dr. Hurd, printed with his Caractacus, which she had praised so liberally, as probably might have raised the envy of her reverend antagonist.

At all times the jealousy of authors have been much the same. It is the foible of the frater-

fraternity, and as inseparable from the profession, as soot from a chimney-sweep.

C H A P. XIV.

LADY COVENTRY'S MODE OF REPAYING HER OBLIGATIONS.

IT happens often in life, that those characters which contribute most either to the utility or entertainment of mankind, instead of being treated with gratitude, and caressed as the friends of society, only share the contempt of ruder individuals, or are neglected by the public. There is no country, perhaps, where the character of a comedian is more respected than in England. Amongst foreign nations, people of this profession are seldom, if at all, admitted into polite society. They are excommunicated by the church, and put under the *bann* of ecclesiastical jurisdiction. In England, however, a more rational mode of conduct predominates. Comedians who have attained celebrity in their profession, have generally been favoured with the patronage, and allowed to participate in the society, of people of rank and affluence. There was no person, perhaps, who had been more distinguished by the marks of public respect, than Miss B. The consciousness of this, no doubt, rendered the contemptuous behaviour of the Hypochondriac

chondriac Doctor more supportable, though it did not altogether deprive it of its painful influence. There are few minds so blessed with stoical apathy, as to be insensible to the supercilious neglect of the meanest individual, far less to sustain a serene complacency under the receipt of the most ungrateful requitals. Miss B's was by no means of so impenetrable a texture, and she seems to have felt the Doctor's unhandsome coyness, and unmerited indignity, with uneasiness mingled with contempt. Determined, however, to return the favour, she returned to London immediately without giving him the opportunity of another interview, or of a second affront.

The mortification which she had received from the Doctor, was succeeded by a series of painful transactions. On her immediate arrival in town, she learned that Calcraft had set out for Grantham in defence of his sister's honour, which was at that time in no small danger from the intrigues of a Mr. Medlicote, whose name has already been recorded in this history. This Lady was young, possessed of a lively imagination, and of course, lived all the uniform and salutary pleasures of a single life. She sighed for the more social felicities of the connubial state. Mr. Medlicote was a man of dangerous accomplishment. The Lady's desire was marriage, but his object was seduction.

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On the first aspect of this affair, Calcraft's indignation was considerably roused, and he seemed to have formed resolutions of revenge. These ebullitions of resentment, however, soon subsiding, a train of more prudent sentiments occupied his mind. Instead of submitting the matter to the decision of the cane, the pistol, or the sword, he determined to terminate the business by abstracting the young Lady from the society of a man whose ambition was to ruin her. He, accordingly, brought her up to London.

The same post which had conveyed him the news of his sister's situation, also brought him the account of his brother Captain Calcraft's imprudence at play with a noble Earl, who lived in the neighbourhood of Huntingdon. This young officer had been unfortunate enough to lose no less than two hundred pounds. The debt, being a debt of honour, must of course be paid. His private purse not being equal to the discharge of it, he found himself, therefore, under the necessity of having recourse to the funds of the regiment; part of which, as recruiting officer, were then in his hands; and thus to sacrifice his military reputation to the honour of the gentleman. In order to extricate himself from this critical embarrassment, he found it necessary to draw on his brother for two hundred pounds, for the purpose of replacing it, and of saving himself from the
inflexions

inflictions of military discipline. Chagrined by the accounts he had received respecting his sister, and irritated by the misconduct of his brother, Calcraft returned the bill protested. In this situation he sent it under cover to the post-office. The situation of the young man pressed duly, in all its alarming circumstances, on the mind of Miss B. She determined to exert herself in his favour. She was not possessed of two hundred pounds, but her credit was equal to that sum. Her chief difficulty was how to recover the letter which was deposited in the post-office. This, however, she was fortunate enough to effectuate by means of Mrs. Jordan, her milliner, who happened to be related to the Secretary of the post-office; and having borrowed the money, she immediately remitted it to the young man. Soon after, Calcraft was very unexpectedly surprised with a letter from his brother, containing grateful acknowledgments for his pecuniary supply. He was at a loss how to account for this strange transaction. Having recourse, however, to Miss B. the secret was at last explained. This handsome and generous conduct on her part, excited many sensibilities in the mind of Calcraft. He expressed himself in the language of gratitude, and returning the money she had advanced, he pronounced her his saviour.

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Calcraft having brought up his sister to town, the question was, where she could be most conveniently settled. Miss B. was of course applied to; and by the assistance of Mrs. Jordan, she was at last enabled to provide a place of residence, where the narrowness of Calcraft gave frequent opportunities to the generous exertions of Miss B. towards the unfortunate young Lady.

Miss B. was now so much engaged, as to render her almost inattentive to the state of her affairs, which were, in fact, considerably involved. Her engagement at the theatre on this account, became indispensable. She played during the winter, with her usual success. One night *Romeo and Juliet* being bespoke by particular desire, the character of the latter was assigned to her. Lady Coventry (formerly Miss Maria Gunning) was in the stage box. Miss B. had not seen this beautiful woman since the period of their former intimacy, except a few days before her marriage, on a pecuniary visit. Lady Coventry conducted herself with much decency during the progress of the play, till such time as Miss B. had arrived at the most impassioned part of the soliloquy, when Juliet drinks the poison. At that precise moment she was interrupted with a loud laugh, issuing from the box where Lady Coventry sat. An expression of ridicule at such a moment, disconcerted Miss B. so much, that she

she was unable to proceed. She was under the necessity of soliciting leave to retire. The audience indulged her in her requisition, but were so much exasperated, that they insisted on Lady Coventry, and the other persons of distinction in the box with her, quitting their place, which they soon found it most prudent to do.

This unhandsome treatment on the part of Lady Coventry, irritated Miss B. so much, that she thought herself abundantly justified in demanding the sum of money she had borrowed of her, when Miss Gunning. She accordingly sent her servant to her Ladyship for that purpose. The servant had the good fortune to present the requisition to her Ladyship personally. She received it with considerable *hauteur*, and had even the meanness to ill treat the servant on account of the theatrical situation of his mistress. The money, however, was at last paid. This circumstance terminated all intercourse betwixt Miss B. and Lady Coventry. A correspondence of the closest intimacy, had formerly existed between them, and had been supported by letters on both sides. Some of Lady Coventry's are still extant, and are replete with orthographical blunders and mean phrases.

In the mean time Calcraft was seized with the gout in his head; a circumstance which placed Miss B. under the necessity of paying

paying him every attention, and which operated in some measure, in interrupting the progress in the line of her profession.

Mr. Doddsley, a gentleman of considerable literary accomplishment, offered a tragedy to Mr. Rich, called Cleone. The theme of this production was a domestic distress, perhaps the most interesting subject of theatrical representation. Its fate depended entirely on the heroine. This character was assigned to Miss B. During the various rehearsals of the tragedy, many of the literati, friends of Mr. Doddsley, were present. Amongst these were Lord Lyttelton and Dr. Johnson. Miss B's conception of the character which she had undertaken, differed so widely from the opinion of those who had read the play and witnessed the rehearsal, that they did not hesitate to pronounce, that she had mistaken it altogether. In this, however, she had the satisfaction to find they were mistaken. The *manniere niaise* the unaffected *naïveté* which she adopted, produced so new and strong an effect on the audience, that the representation was revived with the most unbounded applause. Even the literati were under the necessity of relinquishing their former opinion; and Dr. Johnson, who was not celebrated for flexibility of sentiment, in a burst of approbation, exclaimed, from one of the benches in the
pit,

pit, "*I will write a copy of verses on her
"myself."*

The day after the performance of this piece, Miss B. was waited on by many of the nobility and gentry, with sincere congratulations on her unexpected success. Amongst these was Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, who had also declared, that previous to the representation, she had positively misconceived her character. Miss B. with some degree of archness asked him, whether he supposed that violent madness would have produced the same effect with unaffected *naïveté*, which she had introduced into the piece. Previous to that period, he had given no symptoms of insanity. Upon the above question, however, being put to him, his eyes began to roll, and had it not been for a fortunate rescue he would have destroyed Miss B. upon the spot. He died soon after raving mad, and declaring, that if ever he met her, he would drench his hand, in her blood.

The run which the tragedy of Cleone had, was uncommonly great. The situation of Miss B's health, however, prevented its being followed up with that success which otherwise would have been the event. Her attendance also on Calcraft, together with an extensive correspondence which she had to conduct with persons of rank and eminence in all parts of the world, retarded, in some measure, her theatrical career.

Calcraft besides, was obliged to go to Bath for the purpose of re-establishing his health; a circumstance which imposed upon Miss B. the whole burden of his private letters. His conduct towards her had become so insupportably ungrateful, that her former partialities for him had banished into cold indifferences; and she determined upon either leaving him, or insisting on his marrying her the moment he returned from Bath, and paying all her debts.

The benevolence of her disposition towards the poor soldiers in Germany, who she understood commonly had their shirts and shoes served very badly, rendered her more impatient of bringing matters to conclusion. To remedy this evil she ordered an additional sum of money to be expended on those regiments to which Calcraft was agent. This added no less a sum than nine hundred pounds to her former debt, and of course rendered her situation more irksome. All the recompence she ever received, was one hundred pounds from the Marquis of Granby, on his return from Germany, and one hundred pounds more from Mr. Fox, together with the honour of military salutation, when she passed through the Park.

The Marquis of Granby's friendship for Miss B. formed itself into so close an intimacy, that as a token of confidence, he made her his *Cash-keeper*. This fortuitous combination

combination of benevolent characters was, however, soon broken. The Marquis of Granby's finance not corresponding to the extravagant expenditures of both parties, Miss B. was obliged to resign her office at his *Board of Treasury*.

After the dissolution of this connection, an unfortunate event occurred to ruffle, in some measure, her happiness. Mr. Fox having been detained beyond his time, arrived late at the theatre, on the night of her benefit. The crowd was considerable, and upon coming up to the door, he happened unhappily to exclaim, "*Lord, I have forgot my ticket! but it matters not, it is my benefit.*" This unlucky ejaculation was next morning converted to a facetious account, by an anonymous scribbler. Miss B. was accused of improper connexion and influence with Mr. Fox; and in short, pleaded as the *great captain's captain* in every thing. This circumstance affected Mr. Fox but very little, though it made Miss B. resolve to avoid his society as much as she decently could; and kept her back from attending the political society at Hollwood, where there was surely much knowledge to have been acquired in the management of empires and kingdoms.

This prudent detention in town, proved in its consequence, very fortunate. There was a *gala* at Hollwood, to which Calcraft, with whom Miss B. still continued to

be connected, was invited. The greater part of the servants had accompanied their master on his trip. Miss B. and her servant remained in the house in town. A violent conflagration having broke out in the neighbourhood, the noise of the people in the streets awakening the maid, she rushed, pale, trembling and speechless, into her mistress's apartments. It is impossible to describe Miss B's surprise and perturbation on this occasion. It was in vain to enquire into the cause of the sudden alarm of the maid, for she was *barrowed up with fear*. Miss B. leaped from bed, and looking out at the window, beheld the devouring flames approaching the mansion where she lay. On this occasion, a remarkable presence of mind seems to have exceeded the first impulses of terror. Her thoughts were instantly directed to the office where Calcraft's papers and accounts lay. These, by prudent direction, were fortunately secured; and the fire being stopped in its progress, all was reduced to a proper state of composure before the arrival of Calcraft; who, upon learning what steps had been taken for his safety, once more, in a fervent, but transient fit of gratitude, embraced Miss B. as his preserver.

The state of Miss B's finances soon after this, rendered a temporary supply of five hundred pounds absolutely requisite. Mr. Furtado of Cornhill, found one of the name
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of Morris, who usually purchased annuities for a Mr. Davy of Spitalfields. This gentleman agreed to give her the money, on condition of her allowing him one hundred pounds per annum, out of the annuities which Calcraft had settled on her. Such was her ignorance of business, and such was the pressure of her situation, that she was under the necessity of rendering herself the dupe of this avaricious pecuniary scriviner.

The five hundred pounds Miss B. had borrowed for the purpose of paying Mr. Sparks. He, however, not being punctual to the time of payment, Crawford of Watford applied to her for four hundred pounds. The money lay by her. He was her relation, and she determined so far as lay in her power, to relieve him. She told him that she would advance him half the money in cash, and would give him her diamond ear-rings, on which he could easily raise the remaining two hundred pounds. He gave his note in return, promising payment in three months. At the end of that period he returned, but only to assure her, that he had been able to procure no money for her.

The heedless Miss B. never thought more of her ear-rings till she had occasion for them. She then dispatched a messenger to his chambers, who only brought her back the news that the gentleman had left the country; that his affairs were deranged, that

he had taken all his friends in to assist him in supporting his family during their exile. The note also, which she had so inadvertently signed, instead of being only for one, was for two hundred pounds. Nor did this appear, till presented by Mr. Smith for payment.

C H A P. XV.

CALCRAFT'S PERFIDY, AND TRIP TO IRELAND.

MISS B. now proposed relinquishing the capacity of Calcrafft's housekeeper, and visit the Continent. But about this time an event happened, which involved some of her best friends in such vexation, as not a little affected her. This was the well-known affair of Ayliffe and Mr. Fox, which according to her account, does not in any degree whatever, affect the honour or character of Fox. The unfortunate wretch continuing a villain to the last, while he was raising heaven and earth to interest the humanity of his injured master, sealed his own fate by an offer of ruining him, on condition that his life might be saved.

A letter to this effect was sent to Mr. Pitt, the political antagonist of Mr. Fox. That great man scorning the mean insidious conduct of the culprit, inclosed the letter
to

to Mr. Fox, who by this very circumstance was prevented exerting himself to save Ay-liffe, as it would have then been interpreted that he had no other way of saving himself.

Miss B. was now brought to-bed of a son, whom Mr. Fox named after himself, Henry Fox Calcraft. She had not been above four days delivered, when Calcraft told her of a letter he had from Mr. Davis, desiring payment of the annuity.

It was then she acquainted him of his duplicity both to her and Mr. Fox, and that she threatened to have her contract realized, the moment she was able to set about it. He quitted the room in a rage. Miss B. repeated her resentments to a female visitant whom she thought her friend, who told her bluntly of Calcraft's prior marriage before he knew Miss B. to a young woman of Grantham, who then resided with an aunt of his named Moore.

This shock had almost totally destroyed her. Her illness was so long and dangerous, that her life was given over by all her physical attendants. It was, however, at last found out by the late celebrated and patriotic Dr. Lucas, that it was an abscess on her lungs.

She was consequently ordered for Bath, where she received relief. Her health returned of course, and with it her predomi-

nating foible, of plunging anew in all the abyss of fashion and luxury.

It was not without infinite assiduity and protestation on the part of Calcraft, she was prevailed on to re-assume her former situation in his house. The only conditions on which she acquiesced with his desire to this effect were, that he should pay all her debts in three months, and consent never to see her alone.

She now received the news of Miss Meredith's death, who had fallen a victim to her passion for the Duke of Kingston. To this nobleman she left her gold snuff-box, with her portrait within it. Miss B. delivered it to his Grace, and wishing she had received a portrait of one whom she so sincerely loved, he sat down and coolly cut it out for her. She regarded such an instance of brutal insensibility with horror, and indignantly left the room.

To Miss B. this amiable young Lady bequeathed five hundred pounds, together with all she was indebted to her, which amounted to twelve hundred; her jewels which had cost near two thousand pounds, and all her laces, which were also of great value. This legacy was the more seasonable to Miss B. that she had no theatrical engagement. Calcraft was punctual in never seeing Miss B. alone, but he did not pay her debts. He now thought himself pretty safe from the dread

dread of what might have been the consequence of her not living with him. And he imagined, as Miss B. and Mrs. Spark were only privy to the stipulation, he could despise it with impunity.

Miss B. consented, in return for the good offices of Mrs. Sparks, to play the Mourning Bride for the benefit of Mr. Sparks. It had gone forth by the industry of her enemies, that her voice was totally extinguished by her late illness. The public were curious to come at the fact by their own ears. It was in fact, never more powerful. Sparks's emoluments were considerable. She, besides, had disposed of two hundred of his tickets.

M. ——— one of the first fingers of his time, met with the mother of her late amiable friend Miss St. Leger. Of her Ladyship she tells this anecdote. Her husband Sir John St. Leger, was the Judge Jefferies of Ireland. His severities rendered him odious. Paul Liddy, the celebrated captain of a banditti, had levied contributions in that district where the Judge resided; to whom he wrote, that if he did not by such a time, and in such a place, deposit a certain sum, he would burn his house and *ravish* his Lady.

When the ruffian was taken, Lady St. Leger would see him. But she was informed by the beautiful Monica Gall, a courtesan whom Liddy had married, that he was ill.

and not to be seen. Her Ladyship immediately asked, whether she was the villain's whore or his wife? "I have the misfortune to be his wife, said she; the honour of being his whore, was intended for your Ladyship."

This vulgarity was not the most criminal defect in her Ladyship's character. Miss B. respected her, from the regard she bore to the memory of a daughter who had been so dear to her. By this means Lady St. Leger wormed all Miss B's secrets from her, and then poured them out in the ear of Calcraft.

Miss B. thought this the best opportunity of performing her promised visit to Mrs. Child, at Brussels. She therefore set out for the Continent. The death of her much lamented friend the Marquis de Verneuil, prevented her intended visit to Voltaire, to whom this nobleman was to have introduced her.

She found her friend Mrs. Child surrounded with company. Her reception was equal to her most sanguine expectations. This Lady endeavoured to make her stay in that city as agreeable and entertaining to her as possible. Miss B. met several old acquaintances, and had the happiness of relieving a Lady of whom she had formerly been very fond. And the only thing which, more than any other, seems to have fretted her, was the insolence and exorbitancy of the hotels.

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Poor Miss French, who it seems, was the loveliest of women, was seized with such a complication of diseases, as obliged Miss B. to forego her intention of visiting any more of the continental towns. The theatre also opening in the month of September, she thought it most adviseable to return to England.

But what was her mortification to find on her getting home, that Calcraft had not paid any of her debts, as he most solemnly had promised to do. She expostulated with him, but he continued to elude fulfilling the old promise, by a profusion of new ones.

About this time Mr. Fox left the War-office, and accepted the Seals. It was with reluctance he changed situations. On this occasion he is said to have been three times minister, and as often a private gentleman, in twenty-four hours.

Calcrafft was not appointed Secretary to his patron. This hurt his pride; and Miss B. with her usual imprudence, was wickedly witty on his chagrin. This produced a real quarrel, in which he discovered at least, as much cool malignity, as she did indignation and contempt.

She had not been long in England, when Miss French, one day as she sat at dinner, expired without a groan. Nature, exhausted by the conflict of delicate sensibilities, sunk down to rest.

This, connected with a constant succession of vexatious events, altogether deranged her temper and impaired her health. Under such agitations of mind, she could not give much attention to her profession. Parties in politics at that time ran very high, and she felt herself greatly interested in all Mr. Fox's good and ill fortunes.

In fact, she now grew equally weary of her political and theatrical connections; and never doubting but Calcraft would pay her debts, she resolved on revisiting the Continent. But as soon as the season closed, Calcraft waited on Lady Tyrawley, and told her, that from a number of losses he had lately sustained, it was impossible for him to discharge the debts contracted by Miss B. at present, and begged her Ladyship would use her influence with Miss B. to have patience until the next season. He then offered to join with her in a bond to Sparks for the four hundred pounds she owed him. Never dreaming that he meant ultimately to deceive her, she once more accepted of the proposal, and joined in the execution of the bond, which, however, is not paid to this day.

Her next step was to make provision for the journey she meditated. She accordingly borrowed two thousand pounds on her jewels; and with this and what she had received at her benefit, she paid her creditors as far as it would

would go. Nor did she reserve more for herself than two hundred pounds.

In this trip to Holland, nothing seems to have occurred worthy of very particular attention. Her remarks on the country, however new they might then have been to her, must now be considered as abundantly trite. On her return to London, she was solicited to accept of an engagement from Mr. Rich; she declined all connexion with the theatre this season. But in consequence of several new musical acquaintances, she was very little in company with Calcraft. His perfidy to her, however, was confirmed by his intrigue with a married Lady of her intimate acquaintance. This did not hurt her in Calcraft's account, but the Lady had affected to be her friend, and was in possession of all her secrets.

She determined at last, however, finally and for ever to leave his house. At that time she received very tempting offers from the two rival theatres in Dublin. She therefore resolved on quitting those mansions which were now so hateful to her, and after settling several pecuniary matters, she set out for Bristol. In her way, she met her noble friend Mr. Fox, who regretted her departure, as it put her still more in the power of the man who had already used her so ill.

On her arrival at Bristol, she engaged with the manager of one of the Irish theatres, at a
thousand

thousand guineas for the season, and two benefits. Here Calcraft struggled also to defeat her intention, by interesting Lord Tyrawley to espouse his cause; and, if possible, procure her return. Her old trusty friend Quin joined also in the same request; and when no other argument would prevail, he laid her a wager of one hundred guineas, that after all she would not go to Ireland. When the good old man found he was the loser, he sent her the money, and a letter replete with expressions of the most flattering friendship and respect.

Calcraft had promised to advance a considerable sum on the jewels which Miss B. put into his hand for that purpose. But the moment he got them in his possession, by a manœuvre which stamps his character with infamy, he found means to defeat her wishes in this respect. She even detected her bracelets and ear-rings, in the possession of the Lady to whom he had lately become partial. And during his intrigue with this creature, he affected to be in a state of distraction for the absence of Miss B.

Mean while Miss B. appeared on one of the Dublin theatres in the character of Belvidera; but the other house, which was then under the management of Barry and Woodward, was very strong. Miss Fitzhenry was a powerful rival. Her success was consequently not equal to her expectations. This, with

with other disagreeable circumstances, soon disgusted her with Ireland. She had bought wine and other articles, of her old friend Crump, to the amount of four hundred pounds. But though in the receipt of fifty guineas a week, such was her œconomy, that she had not a guinea before hand. This gentleman failing, the debts were managed by one Coates, who being interested in the other theatre, had Miss B. arrested for the money just as she was going to play. She was soon relieved, and the fellow threshed for his insolent stratagem.

C H A P. XVI.

IT was during Miss B's continuance in Ireland, that Digges marked her for a conquest. This terminated in an unfortunate connexion with that gentleman, which, however seriously commenced, she thought not binding by the laws of the country on one of her religious persuasion. With him she was not more fortunate than before. And during the two years they continued together, they possessed the art in perfection, of rendering each other reciprocally wretched.

On her return to London, Mr. Alderman Cracroft, in order to make trial of her principles, proposed that she should take the benefit

nefit of the insolvent act. But this expedient she generously rejected. The Alderman pleased with her spirit on this occasion, applauded her highly, for scorning so dishonest a method of extricating herself from her difficulties; and assisted her in such an arrangement of her finances, as relieved her for the present.

She now commenced an action against Calcraft, for presuming to present her jewels to one of his mistresses. The ignominy of this transaction so effectually frightened the rascal, that he offered terms, and the matter was soon and amicably settled.

Miss B. took a house in Jermyn-street, where she lived with Digges. She had many solicitations during this connexion, for favours which she thought no other man than Digges, had any right to expect. And she preserved her fidelity to him inviolate; among the libidinous competitors for her good graces, there was one mad and extravagant enough to offer her *ten thousand pounds*. What a price for such a Bagatelle!

Her upholsterer's man robbed her house. He was detected, and her maid bound over to prosecute him. The wretch, however, had a large family. Miss B. therefore, withheld her maid from appearing against him; and paid the penalty, which was forty pounds, from principles of humanity. The ungrateful villain the moment he got his liberty,

berty, threatened her for compounding felony, and she was obliged to pacify him with fifty pounds more.

Calcraft, on seeing her in the character of Zara, felt all his tenderness return for a woman who had formerly engrossed it in so high a degree. She was consequently, advised to go to France, until the preliminaries for this accommodation could be adjusted; particularly in respect to her debts, which were still unpaid.

But Digges, who could not tamely bear her elopement, overtook her all on a sudden, and had the address to carry her back to Edinburgh, seemingly, though not really, perhaps, against her inclination. He promised that she should not act, and on his breach of that engagement she cut off her hair, that she might at once revenge his perfidy, and triumph in his disappointment. This paroxysm of passion no sooner subsided, then she found means of supplying herself with new hair, and appearing on the stage. Her reception here was singularly flattering.

The Scots, though poor and superstitious to a proverb, have always discovered a strange degree of theatrical liberality.

It was about this period that her mother, who happily was now settled into a habit of sincere devotion, sent Miss B. the celebrated Miss Wordley, who has since become a Quaker preacher. This Lady, possessed of
a strong

a strong imagination, was first fired by scenic representation; but soon found the fictitious, suppressed by the true inspiration: and instead of moving others by her eloquence, must herself be previously moved by the Spirit.

While Miss B. continued in Edinburgh, she met there with two very unexpected instances of gratitude; which affected her the more, as they were the only examples of this virtue she had experienced, notwithstanding the numerous obligations she had conferred. The persons whose conduct proved thus honourable, were a Mr. Hearne, who had made a fortune in India, and a Mr. Douglass who had formerly been her domestic. Both had owned their prosperity to her good offices; and each of them on hearing of her present situation, offered their assistance in a manner which ought to make them both immortal.

The gentlemen of Glasgow having erected a new theatre by subscription, Miss B. and her friend Miss Wordley set out for that city. But on their arrival, they found the Methodists had actually burnt down the stage with all Miss B's paraphernalia. This untoward accident was soon, and in some measure, repaired, by rebuilding the former, and the Ladies in the place collecting among themselves such a number of articles as should supply the latter. In this city also, though
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one of the most sanctimonius in the universe, the gay and giddy Miss B. was so much carested, that she even boasts to this day of their civility.

Mr. Digges had gone to London for the purpose of realizing his mother's legacy. This was no less than four thousand pounds, which she bequeathed to him on the express condition, that he would quit the stage, and take the name of West. When the company returned from Glasgow, she found that Mr. Digges had a wife still alive, who, however, had formally announced her own death in the public papers, that he might not henceforth trouble her.

Miss B. went from Scotland on a friendly Platonic visit to Cave, the family seat of Sir George Metham, the gentleman who had the honour of introducing her to that system of illicit love, by which she has been so much distinguished. Here she had the pleasure of seeing her son, who had come to spend his holidays with his father.

From Cave she proceeded to London, and took up her residence in her mother's house. She then informed Mr. Digges, by a letter, that they must never meet again. Not that she blamed him for the misfortune of having a wife, as he had not deceived her in that particular, but she was teized with his jealousy. Perhaps, while he retained the least spark of his regard for her, it was impossible
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to regard her conduct with any other feeling. At least, whoever is as fond of being admired as Miss B. certainly was, can hardly be an object of perfect confidence to any man of discernment and sensibility.

The Managers of Covent-Garden appeared shy of engaging her; but she found a friend in Col. Brudenell, who had much influence at Court, and whom no theatre could then safely disoblige. At his desire, she was, therefore, received into the company; but she felt awkwardly, from a consciousness of depending more for her present situation on the good offices of her friends than her own merits.

Miss B. was of all others, the most unfortunate in her connexions with those of her own sex in whom she put any confidence. One of her creditors in whom she trusted most, had bought up two of her notes to make her debts above a thousand pounds, that she might not take the benefit of any act of insolvency. This obliged her to apply to her old friend Comte Haslang, to be made his housekeeper, as a security for her person. The moment this particular was settled, her engagement with the Managers of Covent-Garden was announced, together with her intention of playing Cleone the Friday following.

Her popularity was sensibly diminished this season. She upbraids the Manager with

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an unfair mode of treating her, and her censure is probably but too well founded. Both Mrs. Cibber and Mrs. Clive, were striking examples of the fact.

An intimacy now commenced between her and Mr. Woodward, who had been formerly her professed admirer. This excited the jealousy of Sir George Metham, with whom she had for some time been on terms of agreement. The consequence was a coolness between them. He had promised to pay her debts, but now would not fulfil it. And from that moment she never saw him till within a few years since, when he called upon her to render her some assistance.

It has been the fate of Miss B. with many of her betters, to take up her lodging for some time within the rules of the King's-Bench. Her residence was a mean cottage at the Windmill, in St. George's-fields. This spot is consecrated by the Muse of Shakspeare, whose Justice Shallow takes notice of it in the second part of Henry the Fourth.

Not satisfied with this, she removed her quarters to the vicinity of the Dog and Duck, where her female friend Miss Wordley, passed as much of her time in her company as her duty at Richmond theatre would allow.

The woman who had purchased her debts, after bringing the matter fairly to issue, was
cast,

cast, for having thus illegally augmented her own debts, by a purchase of those of others. Having gained this substantial triumph, Miss B. thought proper to appear again in public, and she met with the warmest approbation.

Next season she received an engagement for three years. She began her theatrical campaign with Powell, whose merits were justly admired. She accuses him, however, of dealing arbitrarily by her. He was a proprietor, and flattered Miss B. in very high terms at first; but she apprehends, that he intended from the beginning, to bring forward Mrs. Yates, to depreciate her, which undoubtedly was ultimately done.

Miss B. having tried every other expedient with Calcraft without effect, had now recourse to this. The following advertisement was, at her instance, inserted in all the diurnal papers of the time.

“Speedily will be published, a letter from
“George Anne Bellamy to John Calcraft,
“Esq;

“So comes the reck’ning when the banquet’s o’er,
“The dreadful reck’ning and men smile no more.”

Calcrafft menaced the theatre, unless this publication was stopped, and Miss B. was prevailed on to drop it; for which, she has not to this moment forgiven herself. It was a recapitulation of all his actions during their connexion, and might have produced some
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good effect while he was alive; but the bringing it forward now that he is dead, gives facts which are probably true, a suspicious and malignant appearance.

She had the peculiar misfortune of generally finding those things turn out worst, which were best intended. This was singularly verified by a dispute which happened among the proprietors, in which she was persuaded to take a part, which ultimately and essentially injured her interest.

One evening, after playing the part of Alicia, she was summoned to Lady Tyrawley's, one of her best friends, who was extremely ill. Miss B. however, having a cold, and being extremely fatigued, thought it expedient to defer her visit till next morning. But was then too late. Her Ladyship was no more. This circumstance was the more unlucky, that Lady Tyrawley had promised to bequeath whatever she possessed, as an addition to the fortune of Miss B's daughter.

The same evil destiny attended her in relation to the death of her father. This man, whose abilities and disposition were equally great, sunk at last, into a state of idiotism, which his daughter describes with a wanton minuteness. She went to see him on his death-bed, and kneeling by the side of it, endeavoured all she could to make him recollect her, but in vain.

At

At her next benefit, subsequent to this melancholy event, her old and respectable patroness the Duchess of Queensberry and her noble sister, discovered great liberality. And this year, on casting up her accounts at the conclusion of the season, she found it had turned out exceedingly lucrative.

It was now that a gouty Knight, Banker and Alderman, who had married a most beautiful and amiable young Lady, conceived a violent partiality for Miss B. He was corpulent, ugly, and lecherous in the extreme. He boasted of his presents, and expected by these, to have merited the Lady's favours. But, however imprudent in her commerce with the other sex, it does not appear, that she acted from mercenary principles. She, therefore, considered the addresses of this libidinous and bulky magistrate as an insult, and repelled them with such contempt, as prevented the repetition of them.

When his Danish Majesty visited England, she was invited by Garrick, though engaged in the other company, to perform before him. This happened in the summer. Next winter she had the same honour at Covent-Garden; and in the character of Alicia, observing his Majesty asleep, she got as near his box as possible, and cried out, with as much exertion as the past would admit of, "Oh thou false Lord!" Comte Baltimore, who

who visited at her house, told her, this so effectually roused the king, that he declared he would not for the world be married to a woman of such a bell voice, as it would be impossible he could ever sleep in her company.

This summer died Mr. Powell. The last time she ever saw him he asked her pardon, and assured her he would make atonement the next winter, for the injury he had done her in her profession.

The concluding season of her agreement she was seldom called upon at the theatre; and indeed, the severe indisposition she had undergone, had left her so weak, that she would have executed her duty with great difficulty, as she always made it an invariable rule to play when called upon, if she was able to rise; nor did she ever engage persons to applaud her, or pay the doers of the papers to put in puffs to impose upon the public, under the signature of "Impartial Writers."

Miss B. being no longer engaged at the theatre, determined to remain at Stroud, where she had taken a house, and divert herself with books, birds, and writing. She began a comedy; but was prevented from continuing it, by the return of the pain in her side, to which she had been long subject.

She had now no dependence but on Comte Haslang's promised friendship, and a few jewels, the relicks of Miss Meredith's le-

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gacy,

gacy, the very thoughts of parting with which, almost broke her heart. She, however, came to London, and put herself under the care of Mr. Adair; and, as soon as her health would permit, went, frequently to her house at Stroud. She spent her Christmas there; and at length, again took up her abode entirely in her little rural dwelling, where she lived at a much cheaper rate than in London.

Mr. Foote made her the offer of an engagement at his theatre, which she declined: but this gentleman, and her faithful friend Woodward, having agreed on a tour through France, she took a trip to Boulogne, and paying a visit to the convent in which she spent her early days, had the pleasure of seeing mother St. Francis, the nun for whom she entertained so much respect and affection. Upon the sight of this much-loved abode of innocence and felicity, she could not help regretting, with heart-felt anguish, her having ever been forced to leave its peaceful walls. After what she had experienced from the duplicity of mankind, the vicissitudes of fortune, and the pangs inseparable from the pleasures of the gay world, she regretted with sorrow, that she had not preferred the certain tranquillity to be found here, to all those delusive joys which levity or love confers.

On

On the third of December she always made a dinner for some friends, in honour of its being the name-day of Comte Haslang. The evening of that day, her mother, in whose house she resided when in town, seemed to be indisposed. However, she would not permit her daughter to put off the party; but her illness increasing, she became delirious the next day. Her complaint was a lethargic palsy. She lingered for some time; and whilst Miss B. was kneeling by her bed-side, kissing her hand, she cast her eyes upon her with a benignant smile, and left this world without a pang.

The effects belonging to her mother were seized by her cousin Crawford, who had sworn himself the legitimate heir. She commenced a suit against him in the Commons, which she would undoubtedly have gained, as she was born in wedlock; but an unexpected circumstance prevented her from receiving any redress. The wretch, having spent all the money that arose from the sale of the effects, and having besides bullied some tenants who rented the stables belonging to the house out of what money was due, and being now apprehensive of the consequences of his infamous transactions, took the Gravesend boat in order to fly his country. Justice, however, here overtook him; for being much intoxicated, he fell into the river, and was never heard of more.

Having sent for her furniture from Strand on the Green, she was soon settled again in Brewer-street. Comte Haflang paid for the furniture of her first floor, which came to one hundred and twenty pounds. Mr. Woodward complimented her with two capital basso-relievos for the door, three handsome girandoles, a beautiful grate, &c. &c. and as every person with whom she was intimate presented with some ornament or other, her house, in appearance, was a little cabinet.

Just at this time Calcraft died. It was announced in the papers that he had left her a considerable sum, but the report was entirely without foundation; her name was no otherwise mentioned in the will, than as the mother of his children. He was not, perhaps, regretted even by those to whom he left his fortune. The vexation he must feel at knowing himself to be despised and neglected to such a degree, as to be able to purchase no other company than that of a few wretched dependents, greatly affected his pride; for of true spirit he had not a spark. Not all his riches, his sumptuous dwellings, nor his luxurious wives, could procure him one respectable individual as a companion: he was therefore obliged to take up with his clerk and an attorney, for even his brother the general declined going near him. He promised to leave a handsome provision for the clerk, which was probably his inducement

ment for bestowing so much time on his despised master; instead of which, he only left him the immense sum of a *hundred pounds*. A deed which tallies with the many generous actions which Miss B. relates of him. He left behind him a princely fortune, but without bequeathing a shilling to his wife, or even mentioning her name; a failure by which she recovered a third of his estate, as well as of his personal wealth. This, however, has involved the estate in such difficulties, that his debts are not paid to this day.

Every one seemed to rejoice, when Mrs. Calcraft's suit for the recovery of her claim was attended with success; and no person received greater pleasure on the occasion than Miss B. who had heard her spoken of as one of the best of women.

Her affectionate friend Mr. Woodward was taken ill, not long after the death of Calcraft, and she constantly attended him. This illness brought him to his grave. He made his will in her favour, but she has not yet received any benefit from it.

We are now arrived at the most melancholy part of her story. This unhappy woman having parted with every thing that she could raise a shilling upon, and poverty, with all her horrid train of evils staring her in the face, endeavoured to persuade herself that suicide could not be a crime. She ac-

cordingly formed the resolution to put an end to her life by throwing herself into the Thames: and one night between nine and ten o'clock she left the house where she lodged, which was No. 3, Walcot-place, Lambeth, in order to execute her direful intent. She was kept in St. George's-fields till the clock was on the point of striking eleven, and then made her way towards Westminster-bridge. Having reached it, she descended the steps of the landing-place, and sat down on the lowest, anxiously waiting for the tide to cover her. Her desperation, though resolute, was not of that violent kind to urge her to take the fatal plunge. As she sat, she ardently recommended her spirit to that God she was thus going to offend, by not bearing patiently what he was pleased she should suffer. She even presumptuously conceived, that a divine impulse had given rise to the idea; as if "the Everlasting had not fixed his cannon against self-murder." The moon shone faintly through the clouds, and gave just light enough to distinguish any passenger who might cross the bridge; but as she was in mourning, there was not any great probability of her being discerned or interrupted. She had taken off her bonnet and apron, and placed them beside her on the stairs; and leaning her head upon her hands, remained lost in contemplation, and almost stupified by sorrow and the reflections
which

which crowded upon her mind. She was instantly roused from her awful reverie, by a female voice at some little distance, addressing a child, as appeared from what followed, for they were neither of them visible. In a soft, plaintive tone she said, "How, my dear, can you cry to me for bread, when you know I have not even a morsel to carry your dying father?" She then exclaimed, in all the bitterness of woe, "My God! my God! what wretchedness on earth is equal to mine! *But thy will be done.*"

The concluding words of her pathetic exclamation, communicated instantaneously, like the electric spark, to the desponding heart of Miss B. She felt all the force of the divine admonition; and struck with horror at the evil which she had thus intentionally committed, she burst into tears; repeating, in a sincere ejaculation, the pious sentence which the woman had uttered, "*thy will be done.*"

Putting her hand into her pocket, to take out her handkerchief in order to dry her tears, she felt some halfpence, which she did not know that she was possessed of. And now all her native humanity returned. Impelled by its pleasing influence, she hastily ran up, seeing her hitherto invisible monitress, and gave them to her. She had a thousand blessings in lieu of them; to which she thought the woman

man had a right from her, for having been the means of defeating her fatal purpose. She flew back to the place where the impious scene was to have been acted, and humbly adored that Providence, who had by such an eventual circumstance counteracted it; and for the first and last time in her life, felt a sensation of happiness, from finding there were persons in the world more miserable than herself.

She now remounted the steps, and found her mind inexpressibly relieved. The gloom which had so lately overclouded it, was in an instant dispelled, and a tranquillity which she had long been a stranger to, succeeded.

Such a sudden transition from the blackest despair to peace and hope, she knew could only have been effected by some invisible agent; for she never felt such a ray of comfort diffuse itself through her heart, since those halcyon days of innocence which she spent in her much-regretted convent. "It came over her mind, like the sweet South, that breathes upon a bank of violets, stealing and giving odour."

When she went home, she found her faithful servant Sally had borrowed two shillings from her sister, and bought what she thought her mistress could like for supper, and some tea and sugar for breakfast next morning. No meal which she ever made in her most elevated situation, was more pleasing to her than

than this, shared with a person of such fidelity. So interested, so lukewarm, and so careless is the service of domestics in general, that whenever their attendance appears full of regard or gratitude, as well as duty, they claim every indulgence their station admits of, and become invaluable.

Madam Krudnar, a Polish Baron's widow, was the first after this who came to afford her assistance; and two or three days afterwards, Mr. Harris. Mrs. Whitfield, who had been her dresser, came with a message from Mr. Hull and Mr. Mattocks, offering to raise a sum, by their joint endeavours, to pay her debts. Mrs. Whitfield proposed likewise to raise money among her own friends, and to allow her a guinea a week; which Miss B. received for a much longer time than she had reason to expect.

Mrs. Abington, Mr. Smith, and Mr. King offered to play for her benefit; but the season was thought to be too far advanced; it was therefore postponed.

She now quitted her lodging at Walcot-place, and came to Duke-street, where she still continues. His Grace of Montague honoured her with a temporary relief; and it was the more pleasing, that she had often been favoured with marks of his Grace's munificence. She applied, however, to Sir George Metham, but without success.

Having

Having repeatedly experienced such incontestible proofs of regard from her contemporaries, she thought she might succeed in a benefit. Indeed, the idea was first suggested to her by Lady Lumm. She accordingly applied to Mr. Harris, who, with a generosity to which she holds herself much indebted, not only granted her the house, free from the incidental expences, but used all his interest with the performers, who, one and all, cheerfully lent her their talents.

It was advised by some persons who professed a regard for her, that she should appear herself. Though an absence of six or seven years from the theatre, agitated her mind with all the apprehensions of a new performer, her name being once advertised, it was not in her power to recede. And so extremely apprehensive was she, the night of the performance, that she would readily have given up all the advantages she expected to have been excused from performing, notwithstanding they were infinitely greater than her most sanguine hopes could represent them.

This in a great measure was owing to Mrs. Yates's appearance after a long indisposition. Miss B. was so much intimidated when she was about to make her *entrée*, that she imagined she would not have had courage to go upon the stage, had not Miss Catley, in a manner forced her on.

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The house was crowded with beauties of the first distinction, though it was the month of June. She played Alicia; but asserts to this hour, that she does not know how she got through her part. She was so fortunate as to have her benefit over, the eve of the unhappy riots.

In a short time after, she received the sad news of the death of her eldest son Captain George Metham, in whom she lost a kind son, a true friend, and a spirited protector, and was left destitute of comfort or support, as her other son was in the East-Indies, and her daughter had forsaken her in distress.

Not long after, she lost a most generous and constant friend, Comte Haslang, who had given her repeated and substantial proofs of his munificence. In the distressful embarrassment to which she was now reduced, she advertised for a place as housekeeper, or attendant upon an elderly lady or gentleman. As she had been accustomed to a sick room, she was naturally tender to those who are indisposed, and had acquired much experience from the illness of several of her friends, she flattered herself that she could not fail to please in the character of a nurse. In this, however, she was greatly disappointed, for no one ever enquired after her.

A subscription was opened for her at Brookes's; but the summer being too much advanced, and most of the members gone
into

into the country, it did not succeed equally to the kind intentions of the gentleman who opened it.

Miss B. therefore still labours under the oppression of indigence, with the additional affliction of ill health. May the world have the same indulgence and compassion for her, which she has unremittingly shewn to others! And may Sterne's recording Angel drop the tear of pity and obliterate her faults!

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